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1984

WRITINGS OF HUNGARIAN ISLAMOLOGIST
GYULA GERMANUS

Writings of Hungarian Islamologist Gyula Germanus

Contribution of Islam to World Civilization and Culture

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FOREWORD

It is now two years that one of the great old men of Hungarian Scientific life, Gyula Germanus, died in Hungary.

He left behind a 95-year long life, full of events and adventures. During this time he became well-known all over the world due to his unique scientific carrier and unprecedented will power. His studies and books were published in several languages in innumerable editions and copies.

The work of Gyula Germanus inspired many generations of the Hungarian university students. He taught a number of would be researchers of Arab studies. Many of them now are scholars of fame, university professors, diplomats, some of them make use of their knowledge imparted by Gyula Germanus in the field of mass media having leading posts in the press, radio and TV.

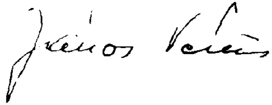
Gyula Germanus visited India several times, spent years in Shantiniketan and in other important university centres of the country. His wife, late Roza Hajnoczy wrote her popular book "Flames of Bengal" in Shantiniketan. This work appeared in many editions since then and has become a manual of lovers of India and of those who wish to get acquainted with India. It is a bestseller, to which Gyula Germanus also contributed a lot.

His stay in India had a productive impact on his scientific activity. The deep roots of the Islam religion and the outstanding cultural achievements of the Mogul period made a very deep impression on the Hungarian researcher. The chapters of our book properly reflect this, such as his study "Islamic Culture" published in "Hyderabad Quarterly" in 1934.

It may be possible that the development of science has outlived certain theses of Gyula Germanus. This however, does not reduce the value of his works, the contribution of a

broad visioned great scholar to the research of the historical roots of Islam religion and its social content. We are very proud that a Hungarian scholar could establish something of abiding value in Islamic studies which is rather far from the mainstream of Hungarian science. Medals and diploma of merit given by the Hungarian Government express the high appreciation of the Hungarian people for the work of Germanus.

The years and the works of Gyula Germanus during his stay in India serve and are still serving as a link between the Hungarian and Indian scientific reseachers community and at the same time they strengthened and continue to do so, the friendly relations of our two peoples.



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Introduction

Hungary with a population of less than 11 millions has surprisingly produced a plethora of orientalists who have made a distinct contribution to the civilization of various countries of Asia. A spate of books recently brought out have enlightened many of us about their original homeland which somehow or the other remained obscure or was relatively unknown to the scholars of the present generation. In the mind and memory of the Hungarian people, there still lingered the belief that before they reached their present abode the so-called land of Pannonia (the part of present day Hungary stretching from the Danube to the western frontier) they were attacked by another nomadic equestrian people, the Pechenegs, and so they were split into two groups. One group came to the West while the other stayed on in the East. In the 13th century, a monk, Julianus was able to trace some of the Hungarians of that place. But as a result of Mongol invasions they were scattered and all traces of them were lost. However Hungarians never lost their interest in the East and their scholars had been visiting the eastern countries to study the language, customs and history of the peoples there. Csoma de Koros, Hungarian linguist (1784-1842) was undoubtedly the pioneer who, in 1824, travelled on foot to the Himalayan plateau, in the hope of discovering the cradle of his nationality. After years of untold privations and 8 years stay in wind

swept and snow covered monasteries of Ladakh and Kinnawar, he produced a Tibetan dictionary and grammar of that language which provided the basis of our knowledge of this unique literature. His was a career devoted to a single object and pursued with utter disregard of self, in Arctic cold; in hunger and contumely. Sir William Wilson Hunter, a well-known British scholar and Editor of the first volumes of the Imperial Gazetteer of India wrote about him in 1885: "We learn that Csoma, in addition to his physical sufferings, had to wrestle with those spiritual demons of self-distrust, the bitter sense of the world's neglect, and the paralysing uncertainty as to the value of his labours which have eaten the heart of the solitary worker in all ages and in all lands. Like Buddha he had to bear his temptation in the wilderness alone; but, unlike Buddha, no angels came to comfort him ." A later German-Hungarian traveller G.W. Leitner (1840-1899) testifies to his popularity among the people of Zanskar, part of Ladakh, where he was affectionately called 'Phillingi Dasa' or *Farangi Das*, i.e. Europeon disciple. At about the same time there was another pilgrim scholar M.F. Remenyi from Hungary travelling through India allured by its musical lore. We have hardly any details about the results of his untiring efforts to quench his thirst for knowledge. In his letter to Hunter, reputed author of Imperial Gazetteer, in 1887 from Copenhagen he made the interesting observation: "*I go on working at Indian music but it is a hard nut to crack, and I stand before its complicated complexity in awe: and very often like a stupid fellow.*" We need not dwell on other Hungarian travellers such as Agoston Schoefft (1809-1888) and J.M. Honigberger, who spent many years at the court of independent Sikh ruler of Punjab, Ranjit Singh and his successors Suffice it to say that their interest in India and its people remained unabated. Aurel Stein (1862-1943), the great archaeologist who explored Central Asia, and was knighted by the British was an Hungarian scholar. To him we owe the discovery of several sites including the *Viharas* in Central Asia and the "Halls of the Thousand Buddhas" with beautiful paintings and unrivalled sculptures. Besides he also discovered a large number of ancient manuscripts and objects of archaeological interest

which are now kept in the British Museum and in the National Museum, New Delhi. Denison Ross sums up admirably his acievements: "Seldom have there been seen combined in one individual such qualifications for exploration. We may perhaps be allowed to call Stein a Superman: scholar, historian, geographer, and athlete all in one. This great Hungarian is the pride of two nations and the wonder of all". The famous art critic Charles Fabri whose love for Indian art and culture have from time to time enabled the western world to discover something of the great heritage of this land, while helping India to rediscover its soul, to quote a reviewer, came to India in Aurel Stein's team. To him we owe thousands of scholarly articles on Indian arts, music, dance and painting. To quote his colleague in the Statesman, Margaret Chatterjee· "Fabri belonged to that generation of Hungarian intellectuals of Jewish origin who were impelled by historical and political factors to travel beyond their own frontiers... . Fabri never talked about his background. The old frameworks had collapsed and he sought to nourish his spirit with the Indian ancient culture to which he had been deeply attracted since his youth. The continent in which he grew up had been so lacking in compassion. The people of Hungary had suffered more than most. Only an ethos which had at its centre the reality of suffering and which saw in compassion its only remedy could satisfy his questing spirit. It was art and human friendship which sustained him and his occasional visits to Budapest from where he would come back refreshed and invigorated." To this distinguished galaxy belongs the immortal Amrita Sher-Gil, one of the greatest painters of modern India. Born of an Indian father and a Hungarian mother, Amrita combined the virtues of Eastern and Western paintings. Her paintings steeped in Indian reality, its villages and peasants, clearly manifest Hungarian influences. As her famous painting "*The Ancient Story-teller*" depicts remarkably her Indian pathos, her another masterpiece '*Hungarian Market*' or '*Woman Peeling Potatoes*' breathe the very life and soul of a Hungarian kitchen and of a Maggar village during a Sunday fair.

To the distinguished genre of these Hungarian scholars-travellers belongs the great orientalist Professor Gyula

Germanus. However, his compass was much larger and areas of his study spread over the whole of Asia particularly those countries where Islamic studies are cherished. Even before him another Hungarian scholar Ignac Goldziher (1850-1921) had made a deep study of Islam, as a religion, its history, language and literature. He had written quite an exhaustive work entitled "*Muhamedanic Studies*". In this work he had devoted a chapter to 'Islam in India'. He had mentioned in some detail the mutual impact of the two great religions of the world viz. Hinduism and Islam. He pointed out that India was perhaps the first country where Hindus had been spared their lives by the Muslim conquerors mentioned as *ahl-al-Zimmia* (those under protection), while in other places the unbelievers and their temples were destroyed if they did not embrace the religion of the faithful. He praised the efforts of Akbar the Great (1556-1605) who brought together representatives of various religions in an effort to reconcile their conflicting viewpoints. Goldziher in this respect compared Akbar to Amenophis IV (Ekhnaton). But his efforts no doubt substantial were of pioneering nature and it was left to his great successor Germanus to make a lasting contribution to Islamic history and culture. His works won him recognition in the entire Islamic world besides India where Islamic studies are pursued with equal zeal. In his eagerness to understand Islam fully, he even renounced his faith and become a Muslim which enabled him to visit the holiest shrines at Mecca and Medina and spent many years of long life in the company of the learned 'believers' to gain first hand knowledge and write on them with authority and precision which only a limited few could claim. He won the coveted title of *Haji* about which the well-known authority on the history of the Arabs Philip K. Hitti wrote in 1964: "Not more than fifteen Christian-born Europeans have thus far succeeded in seeing the two holy cities and escaping with their lives. The first was Ludovico di Varthema of Bologna in 1503 and among the latest were an Englishman, Eldon Rutter, and a Hungarian Gyula Germanus". Germanus succinctly described his experiences in the land of the faithful in a two-volume work entitled *Allah Akbar* which was published in Budapest in 1936. So interesting and informative

was this work that it was immediately translated into German and Italian. Some of the chapters from this work, such as the Geography of Arabia, Islam in India, and the World of Dervishes, etc. were translated into English and serialized in well-known scholarly journals. In this work not only he presented the previous knowledge but on the basis of his research arrived at completely new conclusions. For example in his chapter entitled "The World of Dervishes", he shows his depth of knowledge about mysticism in the East and the West and their mutual borrowings. "The dance of Dervishes", to quote Germanus, "to the monotonous chanting of mystic phrases is aimed at a complete withdrawal from the life of the earth and a rapturous union with the Supreme Beloved". This observation holds good even today. The Baqtashi, an order, which at one time owing to its close connection with Janizaries, held a position of special importance sank into the background after the suppression of that force by Sultan Mahmud in 1826 but again became active in recent years. In Albania it has quite a substantial following. By reason of its heterodox views it should hardly be regarded as belonging to Islam but it certainly makes this claim. Germanus described his experiences as a pilgrimage in detail in an interview which he gave some time in 1971. Interestingly he had carried the Hungarian national flag under his clothes regardless of the consequences when he visited Medina for the first time in 1934.

Born on November 6, 1884, Gyula Germanus was only a student at the Grammar School when he was attracted by the Turkish period of Hungarian history. However it was primarily based on Western sources which did not satisfy Germanus who was eager to know the Turkish account of the occupation of his country. It led him to learn Turkish at a very young age, later on he picked up Persian and this he did under the guidance of the famous Hungarian Professor Armin Vambery. To master the Turkish language, Germanus went to the Constantinople where he became acquainted with a number of contemporary writers. However he was involved himself in new Turkish politics, was imprisoned and even sentenced to death. Eventually he was let out with orders to leave Constantinople. Returning to Budapest he

continued his Arabic studies under Professor Ignac Goldziher, a great Hungarian scholar of Islamic learning. He knew German of course, and English and French among other languages, his polyglot talent generally on Islamic studies and specializing in Arabic, which he found extremely difficult to master. He once said: Although I have been learning Arabic for sixty-five years and have been elected members of the academics of sciences in Cairo, Baghdad and Damascus, I still have difficulties with it. I am still learning it. The Arabic language is like a sea—which has a beginning, but no end. It is an ocean." He got his doctorate in 1907 at the Arts Faculty of former Pazmany Peter University in Budapest in Turkish and Arabic language and literature and history of the Antiquity. His researches took him to London in 1908 where he worked at the Oriental Department of the British Museum for 3 years and on returning home was appointed Professor of Turkish and Arabic Language and Islamic History at the Hungarian Royal Academy of Eastern Trade. He occupied this position until 1921; meanwhile he made several study-tours to the Balkans and Turkey. In 1921 he was appointed Professor at the Oriental Institute of the newly established Faculty of Economics. In 1926, at the invitation of John Golworthy, he was elected Secretary-General of the Hungarian Pen Club established at that time.

Germanus, like his great predecessors was greatly interested in India and her people. He was anxious to visit this great country which was the home of all the great religions of the world. Soon there came an opportunity which was destined to fulfil his life long ambition. The world famous centre of learning at Santiniketan under the great Indian savant, scholar, poet and statesman Rabindra Nath Tagore decided in 1928 to set up a Chair of Islamic Studies with the liberal donations made by the Nizam of Hyderabad. The incumbent of this post was to be paid an honorarium of £ 350 a year with free quarters. The post was advertised both in India and Europe, as observed in the Annual Report of 1928 of the University. A large number of applications were received. The Selection Committee consisting of the President, Jitendra Mohan Sen, Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, Rathindranath Tagore and Dr.

Prasantachandra Mahalanobis recommended unanimously that Dr. Julius Germanus of the Oriental Institute of Budapest, Professor of Turkish and Arabic at the Royal Hungarian University, be invited to accept the chair. This recommendation of the *Samsad* (Governing Body) was accepted on 19th December, 1928, and a cable was sent to Dr. Germanus requesting him to join duties as early as possible. Immediately after his taking over this coveted post, Prof. Germanus drew up a detailed programme of Islamic studies which included the history of Islam from earliest times and its expansion in various countries. He laid stress on a critical study of the Turks in India. He encouraged students to study the sources and after every lecture a seminary class was held for critical examination of these original sources. Separate seminary classes were held for the study and interpretation of literary and philosophical works. He built up a good library which was stocked by standard reference works on Islam. Hostel accommodation was provided to the students and researchers on a nominal amount of Rs. 13 (£1½) per month, while an additional sum of Rs. 12 was charged for food.

Besides streamlining the study of Islamic history and culture in the University of Santiniketan, Dr. Germanus gave lectures regularly on all aspects of Muslim religion and its philosophy. Under the guiding influence of Rabindra Nath Tagore, he engaged himself in the noble cause of "laying a new foundation for the synthesis of world culture". He made an impassioned plea to all who had the cause of Islamic studies at heart for books and manuscripts and also for further benefactors for the maintenance of advanced students and research workers and added, "We have every confidence that our appeal will not be in vain and that it will be possible to create at Santiniketan, the 'Abode of Peace', a living centre for the study of history and culture of Islam—'Religion of Peace'." Germanus stayed in Santiniketan for several years and produced a galaxy of scholars interested in Islamic studies. His wife Rozsa Hajnoczy wrote her famous book '*Flames of Bengal*' while in Santiniketan. This book ran into many editions and is still regarded as a manual by all those interested in India and its people.

He delivered lectures at various other universities in the country such as Bombay, Agra, Aligarh, Lucknow, Calcutta, Hyderabad, Delhi and Dacca (now in Bangladesh). He was greatly impressed by Tagore whom he described as "an incredible phenomenon, an extraordinary genius". When the great scholar-statesman, afterwards President of the Indian Union, Dr. Zakir Husain invited him to give lectures at Delhi, that Germanus decided to embrace Islam and he had the unique privilege of leading the Friday prayers and giving the sermon from the pulpit in the Delhi Jama Masjid. This enabled him to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca and also to acquaint him more closely with what he called "the mentality of the Mussalman". He did arouse the curiosity and even suspicion of some of the fellow pilgrims but he could dispel their doubts by his learning and humanity. He was invited by the then king of Saudi Arabia, Abdul-Aziz ibn Saud, who wanted to know his identity. To a question "What kind of people the Hungarians were ? ", he replied "Relatives of the Turks", and put the King at ease who made a sweeping gesture of his arm and said *Anta dhaifi* (You are my guest). Two days later the king entertained his learned guest without any other guest. His second pilgrimage proved to be a hazardous one and but for his camel driver, Mahmud, who did not allow his companions to bury Germanus, unconscious though he was. He regained his senses after reaching an oasis from where he went to Riadh and thence to Mecca. He had the distinction of being received at a special audience by the Turkish Sultan Mohammad Rashid because he was the only foreigner with whom he could talk without any interpreter.

He found a great difference between the teaching methods in European Universities and centres of learning in the East. The Muhammedan mosque-schools, according to Germanus, which later became model to European universities, came into being in Arabic Spain—the *madrasa* schools where everything was taught, from reading and writing to the most advanced branches of philosophy and science. However, whereas in European universities the teachers often sat on a raised platform at a high desk, in the eastern universities, as at Santiniketan where he taught under a sal tree, the teacher would

take his seat in the middle of a group of his students and thereby developed a close relationship between the teacher and the pupil. During his long tenure of teaching for 56 years, because he retired at the age of 81, he never, not even for a day, sat on the platform.

In one of his essays 'Islamic Studies', Germanus wrote: "From the historical point of view the preaching of Muhammad and the consequent spread of Islam is one of the mightiest factors in the history of humanity". The cultural evolution of Arabia he attributed to Muhammad without whom the Arabic civilization would not have taken roots for an unforeseeable future. He admired the shrewedness of Prophet Muhammad and his practical bent of mind when he incorporated the pagan rites of *tawaf* and *haj* and the sacred black stone. Prayers resulted in a discipline unknown to the pagan Arabs and the tribes who used to squander their energy against one another now directed their offensive against their neighbouring states and conquered them without much difficulty. But as Germanus writes: "Territories rich in corn and in treasures of culture fell an easy prey to the Arabs of the desert. But the Koran soon proved insufficient for the administration of a great empire. Here historic events were the forces which worked for the future syncretism of Islam with local factors". Greeks and Persians were employed as administrators, and Roman Law supplied the first impulse to a scientific rendering of the *Shariat*. "Islam conquered vast territories and peoples" writes Germanus, "but in its victorious march it did not disdain the much nobler conquest of culture, amalgamating all mental treasures which it found suitable and which it incorporated without hesitation into its own and social-political structure. Necessity and also self-control dictated by the Koran prevented forcible conversions on a large scale ; the constant allegation flung at Islam in this connection is contrary to historical facts. The appropriation of land and a wholesale conversion of the defeated peoples would have been a financial catastrophe to the Islamic State and Omar's foresight and toleration averted this great evil".

The Arabic language was enriched by collecting, sifting and writing the pre-Muhammadan poetry. The work of

translation from other languages was taken up and the treasures of the ancient world were thus rendered into Arabic. Arabs thus preserved the culture of Greeks, gathered and absorbed the folklore of India and the science of China and transmitted all these priceless treasures to the West. However, Germanus was mistaken when he thought that the so-called 'Arabic numerals' were the gift of the Arabs. Actually they were borrowed by Arabs from India and transmitted them to Europe.

The Turks of Central Asia, in the words of Germanus, Ghaznavids, Seljuks and others known to history by the names of their leaders, adopted the Muslim faith and added it the manifold influences of the Byzantine in dress, architecture and social custom. The invaders of Hindustan were Turks, the culture which they had originally brought to the country was Persian but in conformity with their own nature they soon imbibed the spirit of India and transformed it into a new and magnificent form.

Germanus made a deep study of role of Islam in India. He was fully convinced of its great contribution and the factors which impeded its progress. The Arab conquest of Sind, though a part of this expansion, could not affect India as a whole. When it reached North India about 600 years after its birth, Islam was a changed religion although it retained some of its basic features. In spite of its religious belief in the brotherhood of Islam, it had become during these centuries class-bound and feudal in its outlook. Its political or economic structure could bear no comparison with the well thought out and comprehensive system of the Hindus. The tradition of the Hindus and their total outlook on life were still strong enough to resist the mores enjoined by Islam. It was no wonder then that this political triumph did not lead to intellectual, moral or religious conquest. It did not change the essential character of the Hindus, whose life continued as of old. The Hindus had previously a accepted people of foreign faiths, such as the Jews, Christians and the Parsis who did not affect them in any way. The Muslim conquerors and their followers created problems which India had not experienced before. Throughout the medieval ages the problem,

as Jawaharlal Nehru put it, was how these 'two closed systems *each with its own strong roots could develop a healthy relationship*'.

For seven centuries the struggle for supremacy went on. On the one hand, there was the 'influence of Islam and the philosophy of life represented by it. On the other hand, there has been the pervasive influence of Indian culture and civilisation.' The initial clash was inevitable followed by re-approachment, fusion and mutual adjustment.

Sind might have been the first Muslim colony in India but the Arab merchants had settled themselves on the Malabar coast about a century earlier and carried on their trade in spices, ivory, gems etc., between India and Europe under the patronage and protection of the Hindu rulers who did not object to conversions. It was through these traders that a constant stream of Muslim influence flowed in upon the Western coast of India resulting in a mixed population, half Hindu, half Arab or Persian, in the trading centres along the coast.

Much more important, however, from the point of view of impact of Islam on India was the second phase, the Turko-Afghan conquest of India, beginning with the 11th century which brought Islam to India as a political force. The Iranian-Arab culture which the Muslims carried was a composite culture, Arabs having absorbed the ancient civilizations of Iran and Egypt and the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization. Characteristically enough, the Arabs had accepted in course of time some of the ancient traditions and legends of these countries as part of their own national heritage. Germanus rightly concludes: "Islam does not in any way imply a uniform culture which shut out all foreign influences. On the contrary, it resembles a magnificent river, fed by innumerable tributaries, which fertilizes the land through which it passes and conveys the cereals and the rich merchandise from one country to another along the shores washed by it. Geographical and historical influences have removed it from the environment from which it sprang, and have broadened it in many directions." Islam made a bold bid for world sovereignty when Europe was engaged in fatricidal wars and met with initial

successes when Hungary was conquered and Islam pressed on to capture Vienna, the centre of European culture, but the fierce resistance and tactical superiority of the Charles, "the hammerer" frustrated their design otherwise to quote Gibbon, "it would have led to the chanting of the Quran in the British isles today." Though Islam had to yield in Europe, but this was more than made up by the gains of the Ottoman Turks in South-East of Europe and by the Baberides in India. The disintegration of the Mughal Empire in India be contributed to economic factors.

Unfortunately, not many references to his lectures are available in contemporary papers of the period but his articles in various reputed journals including Visva-Bharati, Islamic Culture, etc make it abundantly clear that his main attention was focussed on Islam—its history and culture, language and literature, etc in West Asian countries. It was quite natural considering the fact that Islam in India was a subject included in the curriculum of historical studies in India. However, from stray references we find the deep insight he had of the role of Islam in India, for example, in his article in *Islamic Studies* he writes: "The invaders of Hindustan were Turks, with all the characteristic features of their race. The culture which they had originally brought to the country was Persian, but in conformity with their own nature they soon inherited the spirit of India and transformed it into an altogether new and magnificent form." As V. Gathy, one of his admirers writes: "The Sultanate and the Mughal Empire could not go beyond the achievements of the earlier Hindu emperors in the essential economic structure of the country either. Moreover with the continued neglect of agriculture, whole region became desolate and the peasantry was impoverished." We may not wholly subscribe to this view but it is a fact that the constant wars and the ever growing demand for increase in taxes made the plight of the peasants miserable. However, during times of peace conditions changed as extensive trade both inland and overseas became one of the major sources of revenue. Germanus love for India and its people inspired younger generation of scholars who devoted themselves to resembles in Indian History and culture.

A colossus among contemporary scholars devoted to Islamic studies, he wrote and lectured on such diverse topics as Turkish Literature, The Revival of Arab Intellectualism, Legacy of Ancient Peoples, Hungarian Orientalists—Past and Present, The New Palestinian Poetry, Modern Movements in Islam, The Munda Language, etc. However, his main interest concentrated on classical and modern Arabic literature. His monumental work entitled *"The History of Arabic Literature"* was first published in 1952, its revised and enlarged edition was brought out in 1973. His works show his depth of knowledge, clarity of vision and his impartial approach to his subject. He translated and wrote a commentary on the poems of Ibn Rumi, an Arab poet of the 10th century. In this work, Germanus lays great stress on Rumi's internal poetical development. He also depicts the social background of the Muslim society under the early Abbasids The poets were dependent for their means of subsistence on the whims of their masters. After his analysis of environment, Germanus subjects Rumi to a well-nigh psychoanalytical examination, substantiating every statement of his by translating quotations from his poems which clearly show his disillusion with the Arab rulers due to his foreign—Greek and Persian parentage. It was during this period that he wrote his famous satire which made him along with his contemporary Dibil the most dreaded poet of his age. Germanus' treatise contains a stately anthology, unique in its kind which can be read with interest not only by the Arabist but also by the students of psychoanalysis and the history of literature as well as the general reader. He published the *Arab Koltok antologiaja* (An Anthology of Arab Poets) in 1969 and in his comprehensive history of Arabic literature has dealt with the works of contemporary Arab writers (*Arab Irodalomtortenet*).

Some of his writings such as the *Modern Movements in Islam* and *Causes of the Decline of the Islamic People* are thought-provoking studies which could have only been possible by an outside observer with a sympathetic yet critical and scholarly approach to the subject. Regarding the rise of Islam, Germanus writes: "The starting point of this mighty culture was Mohamed, the Prophet and his Book, but the impelling

force was supplied by Arab bravery, and a lack of organisation on the part of its opponents. Its development was helped by the absorption of practical ideas of statecraft from Hellenistic sources.... The religion of Islam extended and broadened into a disciplinary force which satisfied not only the emotional aspirations of the human soul, but regulated his doctrinal belief, jurisprudence and daily life." How did Islam with its dynamism, spirit of progress, highly advanced jurisprudence and literature which was far ahead of European nations in the 9th and 10th centuries lost its energetic role a few centuries later (15th and 16th centuries) while its armies were still irresistible on the battlefield. Germanus describes it to the fact that the countries of Islam had been stagnating in every department of the human mind while science progressed immensely in Europe. However he goes further to find out the reason even behind this phenomena and observed that "education in Europe liberated itself from the shackles of dogmatism during the Reformation which saw the starting of secular schools and the opening of doors to free investigation. In Muslim countries, on the other hand, education remained confined to the mosque which claimed to be the supreme adjudicator of all physical and mental activities of man." Contrary to the movements started by Reformation which, according to Germanus, touched the interests of the people, "each and every Muslim government forced the Islamic Church to accept the fiction that the ruler is the shadow of God on earth and that no action against his autocracy could be morally justifiable." The Muslim Turks waged ceaseless wars on behalf of Islam against the non-Muslim Slavs of the Balkans as well as against the Muslim Arabs of Arabia. "Was not Islam", argues Germanus, "in these wars simply identified with the dynastic ambitions of the Ottomans against the interests of both the Turkish as well as the Arabic people." The Muslim subjects thus became victims of the wars of their rulers while they lived in ignorance and poverty.

Germanus strove hard to explore facts by meticulous research and arrived at conclusions which are comparable, of course to a limited extent keeping in view the range of studies, to great historian Toynbee. Only a scholar like him could

have summed up the traits of the Arabs, the Persians and the Turks in a few sentences: "While the Arabs were born formalists and the Persians born idealists, the Turks were born organisers and administrators. These peculiarities of their character find expression in the structure of the three respective languages: the mathematical rigidity of the Arabic, the volatile richness and beauty of Persian, and the lucidity of Turkish." The Arabs could never unite to form a state, they adhered strictly to their tribal organisation. On the other hand, the Turks believed in the supremacy of the state—organisation based on the acceptance of a common rule irrespective of racial heterogeneity. They were great assimilators and carried cultural influences from one end of Asia to another. They were tolerant people and became Shamanites, Christians, Buddhists and Muslims in turn. They adopted the customs, manners and arts of the people; they conquered and did not interfere with their religious life. But as Germanus significantly concludes: "This liberal spirit finally proved detrimental to their own interest for in spite of a unique military organisation, the subjected people never became absorbed by them and never ceased to continue their individual life." They carried forward the message of Islam after their conversion but in the process they lost their own individuality and nationality. It is interesting to note that a specialist of Hungarian origin by name Urban cast some of the great cannons that the Ottomans brought to the siege of Constantinople in 1453 A.D. The great Ottoman Empire began to disintegrate after 1683 after the relief of Vienna by King Sobieski. While the French Revolution aroused revolution among the peoples of Germany, Poland and Hungary, Turks remained passive spectators and only awoke from their slumber after the Crimean War where they came into contact with the liberalizing western influences. The 'Young Turks' Party which grew out of these influences soon liberated their people from the bondage of the past. Instead of Arabic, the Turkish became a means to express their thoughts and aspirations. The idea of nationalism was vigorously propagated and ultimately Mustafa Kamal emerged as the leader of the nation who declared Turkey a republic on October 30, 1923 and next year suspended the Caliphate

altogether. Germanus goes on to describe the impact of New Movements on Turkey and admirably concludes: "Turkey appears to have burnt all the bridges which connected her with her history, and she looks only to her future."

Germanus' range of study covered many countries of West Asia. He wrote a critical appreciation of the literary works produced by the scholars of Morocco after its independence. He was impressed with their achievements. He opined that the patriotic spirit had regained its rights and found expression in thoughts and language which however, "betrays the vestiges of European learning enhanced by oriental splendour". He studied in depth the literary history of Morocco whose writers he found were "free from bias and complacency". He pays a handsome tribute to its prose writers and poets who freed themselves from the shackles of the interminable rhyme and the prescribed sequel of the subject particularly when they concentrated on folk songs and concludes "For centuries the religious spirit has animated the Maghrib upto our days. Religion, although still the inner inspiration of peoples, has gained a new ally in the conscience of the believers in nationalism from foreign rule and exploitation. New means of livelihood opened new paths for Muslims on which, independent and free, they will successfully march alongside with other nations, to fully unfold their inborn faculties."

Germanus had penetrating mind which transcended narrow geographical limits and spread light on distant parts of the world. He made distinct contribution to the course of indological studies by delving deep into the history and literature of various countries of West Asia. His well researched papers on these themes will ever remain a monument to his scholarship. It was no easy task for a Hungarian to learn the difficult languages such as Turkish, Arabic and Persian and what is perhaps more surprising to have a complete mastery over them which enabled him to critically examine their literature. He was critical of the old Turkish literature which during the time of the Ottoman rulers was artificial, imitative rigid and even stilted. Its themes were confined to the kings the courtiers, the palaces, etc. and did not deal with the

peoples, their aspirations, social and economic problems, etc. French Revolution brought a national awakening. The leader in the literary field of this period was the well-known writer Shinasi, who was, to quote Germanus, "the first cultural revolutionary in Turkey". He spoke and wrote about his country and his people. He founded the first Turkish newspaper *Tarjuman-i-Ahwal*, and carried on the fight for eradication of kingship and establishment of a democratic republic in which the Young Turks eventually succeeded and finally Sultan Abdul Aziz was deposed. Germanus is full of appreciation for Shinasi's pupil Namiz Kemal whose "restless, agitating character captured the imagination of the people, and his eloquent language depicted a glorious past for a yet more glorious future". The craving for liberty aroused the same aspirations in the subject nationalities of Rumanians, Serbians, Bulgarians, etc. It is true that Naqim Kemal, the heroic leader of the progressive Turks, was "no nationalist in the modern sense; he was an Ottoman patriot. His conception of the fatherland was the empire of the Muslim Turks, who were confident in the glory of the Muslim past when they fought for the universal cause of Islam." However in spite of his "literary defects, he will always be regarded by the Turks as one of their greatest writers, because the spirit which engendered new Turkey was set free by Kemal." His disciple Abdul Haq Hamid surpassed them all. He depicted the passions and sufferings of his fellowmen. He chose subjects from Eastern history. His famous play *Dukhtar-i-Hind* (Daughter of India) deals with the love of an English officer for an Indian girl and emphasises the social differences between the two races and he gave a call for the freedom of India from foreign yoke. Ahmed Midhat, a prolific writer tried to prove that "Islam in its noblest spirit is not incongruous with the progress of science and philosophical knowledge." He was a great admirer of Hungary's revolutionary poet Sandor Petofi, a man of flaming integrity who took up the cause of the downtrodden and whose songs inspired the revolution of 1848. Germanus wrote about him in various Arabic journals and in the last years of his life helped an Arab scholar Issa an-Nauri to prepare a comprehensive Petofi anthology. Till the end

of his life he worked ceaselessly and to a question whether he was not tired of work, his reply was: "If I could not work, I would probably not live."

Germanus firmly believed that an historian should exclude "all kinds of bias, philosophical, theological or ethical. His duty is to point out the origin and the causes, and the circumstances which determined the actual course of events. He must state the facts and explain, as Ranke put it, "how it happened ?"

We may conclude with the observations of a great Arab writer Muhammad Taymur who wrote in December 1969 on the occasion of 90th birthday anniversary of Germanus: "During his long journeys Prof. Germanus has penetrated deeper into Islamic culture than any of his predecessors. Besides his thorough scientific background he never lost sight of the practical requirements of life.... We, the Arabic speaking peoples can return with respect, admiration and affection—only to some extent—all the great services he has done for our culture and nation. He is the only European member of the Academies of Sciences in Cairo, Baghdad and Damascus; he is also their pride. Every Arabic reader, writer and scholar greets and congratulates the scholar and true man in him."

Many are the honours which came the Professor's way during his long life span. He was elected honorary or corresponding member of several of world's renowned learned societies including Rome's Italian Academia del Mediterraneo, Accademia Leonardo da Vinci, Cairo's Academy of Arabic Languages, Academy of Damascus; visiting Professor of the Universities of Alexandria, Calcutta, Cairo, Hyderabad, Delhi, etc. He had the distinction of being invited to lecture at Cairo's 1000 Year old Al-Azhar University, where in his own words: "Unshod students squat on carpets around the Shekhs (teachers) to study Islamic scholarship sanctified by tradition where I had set my European critical approach against some extreme outcrops on here, together with a study of the various branches of knowledge with a view to proving that the corpus of human science proves and upholds Mohammed's truth... ." At the invitation of the Iraqi

Government he represented the Eotvos Lorand University at the celebrations arranged to commemorate the thousand anniversary of the foundation of the town of Baghdad.

"The world of Islam is for various reasons agog at present which is an additional reason that the scholars should reflect on the life and work of the great Islamist Gyula Germanus who left this world when a new Islamic century begins and the stirring for freedom gnaws everywhere" as Prof. Hiren Mukerjee observed recently. Germanus had himself written as early as 1929 that a minute study of Islam—its history, religion and culture—covering a period of fourteen centuries and ranging over a territory larger than any empire ever in existence be made by a group of scholars working on a coordinated plan. The material is so vast and dispersed in about a dozen languages and the organisation of such a library would be a great step towards promotion of Islamic studies. Some of the selected articles of Gyula Germanus have been given in this volume for the benefit of the readers.

1

Legacy of Ancient Arabia

Highly cultured Europeans look back with due admiration on the classics of ancient Greece and Rome. They study their masterpieces with pride as they rightly consider the ideals of those ancient bards and thinkers as a source of culture. The gay sunshine of ancient Greece and the picturesque landscape of the Roman *campagna* established the models and created the taste which, after centuries, all European thinkers and creators of cultural values have humbly followed down to modern days. Each culture has antecedents in its infancy, out of which the monumental edifice of subsequent ages grows up with all accompanying elements of arts and sciences. Wordsworth's "the child is father of the man" has a deep significance for all forms and shapes of culture.

The culture of the human race has had two cradles similar in some aspects and dissimilar in other aspects ; one in the European South, the other in the East. In spite of sharply contrasting discrepancies, a constant influx and mutual counteraction have worked out glorious achievements for the benefit of humanity.

While Europeans feel indebted to classical Greece and Rome and not vaingloriously extol their cultural legacy, Muslim believers all over the three continents have hardly awakened to the splendour and creative force of the prelude to a movement, which has brought acceptance of the spiritual

rule of the universe and developed into the marvellous prodigy of human will and intellect. The soil of this prelude was the desert of Arabia.

From time immemorial the surplus population has swarmed out of the barren plains of the Arab peninsula and populated the fertile river basin of the Euphrates and the Tigris, creating a rich civilization and mighty empires. The rest of the natives clung to the globe, however dreary and austere, and lived on, fighting for a fresh pasturage or vindicating the tribal honour. It was an arduous existence, as these people were, exposed to the severity of the climate, burning heat and chilling cold alternating with drought and floods. They were awakened from sleep by the sudden onslaught of an enemy, and it was only rarely that their life was enlivened by some joyous event: the birth of a poet or a noble steed and a tolerable harvest. They were locked up amid deserts and surrounded by inimical tribes. Geographic configuration had slowly built up a specific society based on the tribal organisation with all its inherent characteristics of valour, honour, archaic customs, pagan beliefs and superstitions. The South of Arabia enjoyed a regularly returning seasonal rain which rejuvenated its fertile tablelands, and the agricultural bounty of the country nurtured a highly developed society of husbandmen and conduced to the organisation of states with a stable government and a methodic religion. Central Arabia had only transitory alliances of tribes for a certain marauding expedition which soon dissolved after the aim had been achieved.

Life was hard in the desert where the rigour of nature drove some parents to bury surplus daughters in the sands, while drought decimated the scanty population. It is mervellous that amid tough circumstances and physical suffering human spirit has still created such masterpieces as have contributed to the advancement of the loftiest literary art. These masterpieces are the ancient poems of pagan Arabia. Like the Olympic games of the Greeks, which were the pride of that highly talented people and at which the victorious poets were crowned with a laurel-wreath, the fairs of 'Ukaz, Dhu'l-Majaz and Majinna conferred on the Arab bards the highest distinction: the glory and renown of the tribe. There was no loftier

distinction than the repute which the poets won for the clan and its progeny.

The fame of the bards resounded through all Arabia, and the tribes whose security was threatened by the Christian Byzantines and the Zarathustrian Persians in the North, and Abyssinia on their frontiers in the South, sought refuge in the pagan cult of the black stone enshrined in the cubic edifice of the Ka'ba. There, in Mecca, during the sacred months tribal feud and bloodshed ceased, and in the course of the pilgrimage and circuit around the images of idols all Arabia, of whatever clan, Southern or Northern, felt as members of one great nation. The language of the poets through long space of time had matured into one literary idiom sanctioned by the well-refined dialect of the trading community of the Meccan Quraish. Against the foreign Christian and Zarathustrian imperial tendencies Mecca symbolised the unifying national spirituality of the Arabs, and the poets were its mouthpiece and heralds.

No other national poetry can eclipse the honour of ancient *qasidas* through ages. Long after paganism had lost its vestiges, the poetry of its bards still lived on, through the inner inspiration of the *natiqun bi'l dad* and collected from hearsay, was put down on paper and permanently influenced later Arabic writers and thinkers. It remained a repository of an innate spiritual, social culture, conspicuous for its weird originality and indisputable ingenuity. It still stands paramount as a symbol of Arab unity after disruptive forces have long since destroyed political coherence.

Such thoughts emerged into my memory, while I was eagerly following the dispute of scholars and writers in the *Rabita al-Adab al-'Arabi al-Hadith* (Cairo) and one of the leaders presented me with his new book. It was Dr. Badawi Tabana, Professor of the University of Cairo, author of *'Mu 'allaqat al-'Arab*, a bulky volume dealing with the criticism of ancient Arab poetry and richly adorned with quotations of the poetry itself and the evidence of authorities. As soon as I arrived home another valuable present surprised me. Dr. Shouqi Daif kindly sent me his new work, the first volume of his history of Arabic literature, dealing exhaustively with the

age of barbarism *al-'Asr al-Jahili*. Both books brought tender reminiscences to my mind: my rumblings in the oases of Arabia, my visits to the holy cities, thousands of pages of ancient Arabic literature and pagan poetry.

While Western tongues coined for literature the word of "letters" in general, Arabs considered it as a pleasant and polished talk during hospitality, a distinctive feature of the Arab character. The words "poetry" and "poet" are both of Greek descent and originally meant somebody who fabricated or prevaricated something. The spontaneous expression of a sentiment in bound form was a "carmen", a song. The Arab poet was *sha'ir*, somebody who perceived and remarked something, mostly in connexion with the life of his tribe or his fellowmen, and as it were, the appellation of rhymed words had a social significance.

No words in the Arabic tongue could produce such a deep impression as those which after a long series of perfection have gained a rhythm and a rhyme, and eventually resulted in a musical cadence. The rhyme, *qafia*, seemed to denote "skull-breaking" and verily the poets could elate, debase, or even kill with their threatening, pounding rhyming words. 'Abd Qais ibn Khulaf al-Burjumi compares his words to a sword and a lance[1]:

I prepared for fortune's vicissitudes
A speckless honour and a polished sword
And the smash of the tongue as the edge of spears
And a lance with a quivering long rod.

Poets in the Arabian society have enjoyed a privileged position. They were the highly esteemed and formidable ghosts of society. In common belief they surely had intimacy with good or evil spirits, and a demon *ra'yi* inspired their ejaculations, which they abruptly rose on one foot *irtajala* and started to recite with distinct slow strains their interminable lines of inspiration.

Poetry in ancient Arabia was so highly appreciated as

1. *Al-Mufaddaliyat*, p. 386.

the unifying element of discordant tendencies that after centuries some writers argued that many celebrated poems were written with golden letters on Coptic stuffs and hung as curtains on the Ka'ba. These writers, all of them belonging to later periods, seemingly fell victims to a probable misunderstanding of the appellations of the poems as *mudhhabat*[2] of Abu Zaid al-Qurashi,[3] and Ibn Rashiq (d. 1070) repeats this allegation,[4] as do Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi (d. 940),[5] and Ibn Qutaiba (d. 889) and al-Bagdadi in his Khizanat al Adab. Other appellations were *simt*, or necklace, *mutawallat*, or long poems. Abu Bakr Al-Baqillani (d. 1012) calls them in his "I'jaz al-Qur'an" as-Saba'iyat, the seven (odes). In spite of all these assertions and many others collected in Dr. Tabana's book, one cannot believe that the ancient odes of pagan Arabia had been fixed in writing, either on flaxen sheets (*qibli*) or any other material. The word mostly in use *mu'allaqat* designates precious things, similar to necklaces or other ornaments, worthy of being elevated as a token of respect and appreciation. As against Dr. Tabana's exertions to prove that writing has widely spread among the Arab bards, we may make the following statements:

It is assumed on the basis of careful comparative studies that already in the fourth century A.D. Arabic writing had begun to develop into its later round characters from the Aramean letters. Sufficient evidence is brought forward by the comparison of old inscriptions scattered all over Arabia from the South to the North. It is hardly deniable that the shape of the letters was induced by the material used. The oldest Semitic inscriptions, those of the Akkadeans, adopted the cuneiform type, in compliance with the clay, which made it difficult to carve round ornamental lines. Similar considerations have led to the carvings in stone on the Southern Arabian inscriptions from which the Abyssinian letters derived their forms. The stone tablets of the Northern Lihyanis, Safawis and Thamudis show a striking likeness to those South Arabian

2. Properly: worthy of being gilt.
3. *Khizanat al-Adab*, I. 87.
4. *Al-'Umda*, I. 61.
5. III. 98.

letters. This resemblance betrays an eager connexion; material and cultural, of the North with the South. Their language anyhow was an antique form of Arabic, in spite of the use of *ha* instead of *al*, as the definite article. The subjects of these Northern inscriptions show us that the compositors were half nomadic and half settled people.

For the evolution of the Arabic writing, as revealed in the time of the Quran, the Nabatean inscriptions are of striking importance. These were discovered in Petra, the seat of the government in Hijr or Madain Salih, Busra in Hauran (Syria) and in Jabal Duruz. Nabateans were a connecting link between the Southern Arabs and the peoples of the Mediterranean. In the process of time their political power had so grown as to endanger the Roman Empire which ultimately led an expedition against them and crushed their backbone in 106 A.D. Still the constant traffic carried on by the caravans from the South towards the North gradually supplanted the Southern signs, for the predominance of the Nabatean script, as manifested in the inscription, was found at the ruins of a Roman temple. Eastward to Jabal ad-Duruz (South Syria) there is on the tombstone of Imru al-Qais, one of the rulers of Lakhmides, an inscription dated 328, December, known as the inscription of Namara which runs as follows:

The inscription starts with the word تِي which signifies the feminine article for نفس *nafs*, which here must mean the "body". The word ذو has the meaning of الذى with the tribes of Tayyi, اسر means "to bind". The only strange words in the first line is بر for ابن and is decidedly Nabatean. In the second line some words are augmented with a و according to the Nabatean usage, عكدى might be Akkadean, and means 'power', addressed to the tribes of Asad and Nizar حبج meaning the frontiers. *Shamr* was one of the

Himyarite kings.

The true translation would be: "This is the tomb of Imru al-Qais, son of 'Amr, King of the all Arabs, who was crowned and was king of the tribes of Asad and Nizar and their chiefs. And he put to flight Madhhaj victoriously at the frontiers of Najran, the town of Shamr ; the King of Ma'ad and his sons ruled over the people ; Persians and Byzantines acknowledged him ; no other king has reached him in fame and power. He died in the year 223. Kasul 7, (corresponding 328 A.D.) and his sons followed him."

It is clear that the wording of this inscription is an antiquated mould of later *Fusa-ha*, only the word *bar* is pure Aramaic, while *al* is already used as the definitive article instead of *ha*. It presents the Northern Arabic dialect developed in the fourth century and—what is important—its characters have already assumed the later rounded shapes. This inscription is a historic document proving that Northern Arabs have attacked the Southern Najran. It is the first document showing that Northern Arabs tried to unite, after the Romans had subdued Petra and Tudmur (Baalbek), while Persia and Abyssinia had penetrated the South. Arabs now looked towards Mecca as the symbol of union, and all the tribes, Southerners and Northerners, carried their idols to that holy shrine of national paganism and commerce.

Hundred and eighty years after the date of the inscription of Namara we find to the South of Alleppo, at Zabad, between Qinisrin and the Euphrates, on the gate of a temple, another inscription, dated 512 A.D. which shows a further growth of the writing, like yet another tablet found south of Damascus in the Jabal ad-Duruz, dated 568 A.D. These definitely prove that the Arabic writing originated in the North of Hijaz and had hardly any antecedents akin to that of Iraq. The language of the inscriptions has a strong resemblance to the dialects of Arab paganism. The great German orientalist Enno Littmann has collected three hundred Arabic words occurring in the Nabatean inscriptions, like *amun, amat allah, iyas, badr, jamal, rajab, saba', silm, fikr, naqib, wa'il, wahsh,* etc.

The Arabic dialects gradually developed into the literary form probably at the end of the fifth century,

retaining sounds which are absent in other Semitic language like خ, ث, ح, ض, ظ, ه.

Its final perfection is seen in the ancient poetry of paganism, but we do not possess the chain of inscriptions or other written texts which would indicate the gradual uninterrupted evolution of Nabatean-Arabic into the idiom of the *Mu'allaqat*. It is however certain that the dialects of the tribes slowly merged into one common idiom towards the end of the fifth century and the poets of the North and South recited their verses in this exalted literary language. At the same time a course of linguistic unification took place on the bordering line between the North and the South, while in the interior of Yemen the Southern dialect retained its sway. Abu 'Amr Ibn 'Ala, (d. 770) positively stated "The language of Himyar and the outer Yemen is not our language, and their Arabic is not ours."[6] And there is no doubt the Southerners preserved their dialects on the carved inscriptions long after their common speech had gradually approached that of the North [7]

Northern Arabic gained supremacy in the course of time, but the tribes in every day use clung to the varied pronunciation and manner of speech which sharply separated them. These variations still continued up to the second century of the Flight and the Muslim linguists made untiring efforts to study them, although their main interest was directed towards the difference between the language of the Qur'an and the peculiarities of the tribal dialects. Such well-known peculiarities as still survive in many *'Amiya* were the *kashkasha, kaskasa, an'ana fahfaha, taltala, istinta, aj'aja, al-wahm, al-wakam, tamtamaniya*, which have aroused the attention of linguists, from Sibawaihi up to Suyuti and others

A slight tribal pronunciation was reflected in the reading of the holy text. For instance, فنظرة الى ميسرة was read with the *kasra* of the ظ, which was the manner of the Quraish,

6. Cited from Ibn Sallam, *Fuhal ash-'ara*.
7. Shouqi Daif, *op. cit.*, 121.

while the Tamimis spoke it with *waqf.* The Hijazis pronounced رضوان , with *kasra* while the Tamimis and Bakr said it with *damma* ; the Hijazi said, كسلان with damma of the ي the, Tamimis and Asad with *kasra* (*kisala*). A number of such discrepancies are well-known.[8]

Besides the difference of pronunciation, there was a still greater discrepancy in the appellation of certain things. Jahiz reminds us of a spirited anecdote of Wasil Ibn 'Ata, the initiator of the *mu'tazila* movement. The worthy scholar rolled his "r"-s, but the wealth of the Arabic vocabulary enabled him to substitute words with an "r" for others. So he said instead of *burr* (corn), *kinta* or *qamh*. But *qamh* is Syrian, *kinta* Kufic, and *burr* Hijazi. Some commentators explain the word "fum" occurring in the Qur'an as meaning "corn" as well. This anecdote has an important bearing on the phenomenon of the countless Arabic synonyms: the meaning of "wine" has perhaps twenty appellations connoting diverse shades and degrees ; the same applies to other things such as gold, silver, rain, bounty, etc. A striking feature of tribal difference is seen in the variation of the verbs, originally belonging to diverse tribes and later coagulated in the literary language, like: جدف ,جدث ,تابوت . The linguists have collected all tribal words, put them into the dictionaries, which have later on served as mines for writers and poets which to enrich their style. Tribal expressions penetrated into the oceans of *Qamus* and *Muhit*, but besides them allegorical phrases also enriched the literary vocabulary.[9] Linguists glorify in enumerating fifty words for "sword", and as many for "lion,", "camel", "horse", etc. Most of these words are epithets which signalise some traits of the subject. The camel may be *fakhur* having big udder and giving small, milk, *'ajna'*, having a thick and elongated udder, *safuf* putting its legs together while being milked, or *dafu* making the contrary, *mirya*,

8. Shouqi Daif, *op. cit.*, 122.
9. See Germanus, Studies in Arabic Lexicography, *Islamic Quarterly*, April 1954.

easily milked, *akwam* big humped, etc.

Another aspect also aroused the interest of Arab linguists, namely the contrarious meaning of certain words, attributed to the tribal variations, like *jalal* meaning "great", and base, *joun* meaning "black" and "white", *basl*, "permitted" and "forbidden". These discrepancies may result from the difference of tribal use, or expressions of exaggeration, familiar also in English as "awfully pretty" etc. It may be accounted for averting a dreaded evil if the proper meaning might be used. Modern Jews pronounce the word "Yahwe" as "Adonai" (our Lord) fearing lest the ancient tribal "Yahwe" might revenge himself. Arabs call a man stung by a viper *salim* (safe), the desert *mafaza*, the blind *basir*, and the black *abu'l-bayda* and the "raven" as a symbol of portent *halim* meaning "deciding". *Rabwa* means an "elevated ground" and a "declivity". *Zubya*, "height unreached by water" and a "pitfall", *sarim* may mean "dawn" and "night". Dozens of similar contradictive words entered the dictionary from diverse dialects and were set together under the selfsame root.

Abu 'Ubaid says in his books *al-gharib al-musannaf*: "I heard Abu Zeid Ibn Aus al-Ansari saying *sudfa* means in the dialect of Tamim "darkness," and to the tribesmen of Qais "light." *lamaqa* means to the people of 'Uqail to "write" and to the Qais: to "erase". In the Himyarite dialect *wathaba* meant to "sit," in the Northern, it means to "jump".[10]

The Arabic linguists, in spite of their strenuous ardour to collect and to classify the pagan dialects, did not extend their research to the determination as to which tribes used the multifarious forms, and whether such forms of speech were general among all the tribal members, or uttered only by some individuals [11] The difficulty of satisfactorily settling the problem of tribal dialects subsisted from olden times onward. One thing, however, seems incontestably sure and it is that all pagan poets, when they recited their verses, disengaged themselves from their tribal colloquial and rose to the level of the polished *Fusa-ha* in which all ancient poetry has been preserved. As to

10. Suyuti relates in this connection a linguistic joke (*Muzhir*, I. 396).

11. Shouqi Daif, *op. cit.*, 130.

which tribes played the predominant role, opinions widely differ. Some assert that the dialect of Najd rose to the *Fusa-ha*, as the "kings" of Kinda won supremacy over the rest of the tribes. The undeniable similarity between the language of the pagan poetry and that of the Qur'an may convince us that there existed a *counteraction* between the two and the Muslim collectors of pagan poetry noticed a kind of conformity with the heavenly inspirations while fixing the texts of the ancient poetry. Islamic conviction clings to the assertion that the *Fusa-ha* exclusively originated in the dialect of the Quraish, as this tribe dominated the sanctuary, carried the commerce with all the other tribes and neighbouring nations, and were the hosts of the poetical competitions in their territory. The verdict of Ibn Khaldun, notwithstanding, the unparalleled ingenuity of this genius, is this: "This language of the Quraish was the most eloquent and most expressive, in consequence of their distance from foreign peoples." This is not relevant, because he, as a native of the fourteenth century was at a long distance from the time when the Quraishites really spoke a most eloquent language. Nowadays the Meccan Quraish are intermarried and they *intermingled with so many foreign elements, as I experienced* during my stay, that only outlandish Muslim pilgrims bring during the *haj* some faultless *tajwid* into the precincts of the sanctuary.

Anyhow, the literary language (*Fusa-ha*) was entirely predominant in Arabia during the lifetime of the Prophet, for the delegations which visited Medina found no difficulty in making themselves understood and the envoys of the Prophet towards the South, such as Ma'adh Ibn Jabal, who spread the Islamic tenets, could easily fulfil their task. And although the Arabic language has triumphantly spread abroad by means of the holy Qur'an, it had already developed during the sixth century into that uniform idiom, immortalised by the pagan bards.[12]

The mention of "writing" occurs ever and anon in ancient Arabic poetry and there is even proof that some poets used writing so as to fix rare words better. But such a proceeding was not general, as the material mostly used was a stone, a

12. Shouqi Daif, *op. cit.*, 136.

skin, a bone, a palm-leaf, unfit to retain longer texts. The Qur'an has eventually transformed the Arabs from illiterates into readers. But even this sacred book was put down in writing from disjointed parcels only after the death of the Prophet and the *hadith* gained its written form only in the first century of the Flight. Consequently we must relegate all assertions referring to compositions of ancient poetry on writing material *tunuj* to the emulating phantasm of the Kufic scholar Hammad ar-Rawiya. Ancient poetry sprang from the bosom of the bards and their reciters; and their clan or tribe perpetuated it all across the land. A uniformity of creation came into use as older bards served as models to younger ones and the keen retentive capacity of Arab brains immortalised hundreds of verses. Some of them betrayed the inborn sensuality of the Arabs, who did not shrink from reciting lewd rhymes before the idols. This abominable practice persisted in the times of Islam and some historians repeated the impertinence of Ibn Sirin who murmured indecent couplets while entering the mosque.[13]

There seemed no urgent necessity for stabilising the text of poetry until, after the conquest of large territories, each tribe claimed its prerogatives of descent, and the most striking proof turned out to be the poetry. During the war which flared up between Mu'awiya and 'Ali the importance of the respective poems seemed to decide the issue. It was the first motive for collecting those poetical proofs.

The Umayyads were genuine Arabs and were intent on safeguarding the legacy of bygone times. Mu'awiya, Abdul-Malik and other rulers requested missions from the country to report on poetry, and discussion often followed as to the authenticity of the verses in question, and they sent messengers to the respective tribes in order to verify the matter. Mu'awiya is known for having had boon companions who reported Southern legends and stories of olden kings, while servants wrote them down in booklets.

In the heyday of primoridal Islam story-tellers sat in the courts of mosques and inserted poems into their tales. It had

13. Abu Ishaq al-Husri, Jam'al-Jawahir, 39.

become the fashion of Umayyad poets to enhance the merits of pagan poetry and a new set of authors had arisen, who, unlike the previous reciters, were not poets themselves but simply collectors. Poets of the Umayyads like Farazdaq, Jarir, Ru'ba and others, did not tire to refer to such collectors as spread their poems among the people, for poets seemed to play the part of mouthpiece of shifting parties. *Kitab al-Aghani*[14] informs us that a Hudhaili Shaikh went to Farazdaq and he found him among his reciters who improved what was wrong in his lines; afterwards he visited Jarir, and he experienced the selfsame sight. It had become the task of collectors to save the precious legacy of ancient literature from oblivion and, as in the war of conquest, many a bard and reciter perished and a great quantity of texts also disappeared. What remained underwent considerable alteration in matter, context and language, while a mass of interpolation crept into the quondam original.

II

One of the most instructive chapters of Dr. Shouqi Daif's work is that in which he deals with the criticism of the existing bulk of ancient poetry. He sifted all evidence, and as a result of comparative study, he gives us a clear view of the much contested problem.

A galaxy of collectors strove to recover the dilapidated quantity of ancient poetry; some were Arabs, others Muslim strangers *mawali*, but all were town-dwellers settled in Basra and Kufa. The most distinguished among them were Abu 'Amr Ibn al-'Ala Hammad ar-Rawiya, Khalaf al-Ahmar, Muhammad Ibn as-Sayib al-Kalbi, al-Asma'i and Mufaddal al-Dabbi. They wandered among the tribes as far as Najd, and many tribesmen came to Basra and Kufa to help the scholars. Their main interest was restricted to explain the rare words of the Qur'an by dint of dialectical research. It had become the habit from Ibn 'Abbas onward to quote from pagan poetry in order to solve some delicacy in the sacred

14. IV. 256.

book. In the course of this endeavour the edifice of the Arab grammar was built up, but as a consequence the collection of ancient poetry for its own sake also gained recognition and was eagerly pursued.

At the opening of the Abbasid period we find two distinct linguistic schools: that of Basra and that of Kufa, one rivalling with the other. It is, however, noteworthy that the Kufi scholars seemed to possess a livelier fancy which induced them to fabricate some texts and to alter others. The same blame clings to this school with reference to the collection of the traditions of the Prophet. Malik Ibn Anas called the Kufi school "a mint, where traditions are coined like current money". Abu Tayib al-Lughawi expressed a similar view.[15] As a matter of fact both the schools produced apocryphal poems, besides a great deal of such poetry as no censor can dub it spurious or take umbrage at.

The representative of the Basra school was Ibn al-'Ala, a worthy pure-blood Arab, known for his knowledge and piety. The representative of the Kufi school was Hammad ar-Rawiya (the reciter *par excellence*), a totally different figure. He was born as a client (*moula*) in 713, and died in 771. In his youth he associated himself with beggars and thieves and one night he fell upon a man whom he plundered and among the booty he found some poetry of the helpers (*ansar*) of the Prophet, which he studied and which exerted such an impact on him that he became a diligent apprentice of old history and abandoned his previous adventures. In a short time he grew into such an expert in ancient poetry that he could pick out the false lines from the authentic ones in the presence of Walid Ibn Yazid. On the other hand, he was known as a disreputable fellow, according to Jahiz even a heretic, (zindiq), who could forge ancient poems and attribute them to celebrated bards. Whether he did so to cheat people or by more playfulness, still he must be credited with a marvellous memory and a poetic skill rarely to be found, as his falsifications were so impeccable that only careful scrutiny could detect the forgery. Contemporaries already suspected the recensions of Hammad

15. Maratib an-Nahwiyin Fy.

and extended the suspicion to his pupils Ibn Kunasa and Khalaf al-Ahmar, the latter being a Basri scholar. Some Kufi scholars were notorious falsifiers, like Barzak al-'Aru'di and Jannad, all of them of foreign extract, while there were also trustworthy collectors, at whose head stood al-Mufaddal Ibn Muhammad Ibn Ya'la ad-Dabbi, (d. 786). His collection of ancient poetry, the Mufaddaliat, seems to be trustworthy beyond any doubt.[16]

Khalaf al-Ahmar's forefather hailed from Ferghana, but in spite of his foreign descent, he acquired a vast knowledge of Arabic lore, generally recognised by contemporary critics, but he too was not free from suspicion as to forgery. He was even accused of being the author of Shanfara's *Lamiyat*, a wonderful piece of ancient poetic product, true in all its items and language to the character of a wandering outcast minstrel. He might have forged another *Lamiyat* attributed to Ta'abbata Sharran or his nephew. Al-Asma'i, a Basra scholar, boldly attacked him for his artful falsifications, through which he cheated the people of both Basra and Kufa.

Al-Asma'i, a severe critic of his rivals, was a genuine Arab and was considered as a man of great erudition. His collections, the *Asmaiyat*, are accepted as exemplary. There were also some other research workers who busied themselves with old traditions and historical events but whose reliability was doubtful, like Muhammad Ibn as-Sayib al-Kalbi (d. 763) and Haitham Ibn 'Adi (d. 821) and Kalbi's son Hisham (d. 819), who gained a reputation for forged compilations, boldly followed by the historians al-Waqidi and al-Madaini.

Scholars, however, were not tired of examining all the *diwans* of the collectors and they were able to sift the original from the spurious ones, as was the case with the traditions of the Prophet, nay, they even surpassed them in accuracy. Ibn Sallam, for instance, informs us as follows:

"Yahya Ibn Sa'd al-Qattan told me: The reciters of poetry were more cautious and honest in behaviour than the traditors of hadith, because although the traditors related much improbable stuff, the reciters in the course of their recitation

16. Shouqi Daif, *op. cit.*, 153.

often immediately pointed out the false lines." On the whole, the now existing collections barring those which trustworthy critics have definitely rejected—must be accepted as original in spirit and language, albeit some words were misplaced, or one poet slipped in some tribal word, or collectors inadvertently stole in a special Quraishite phrase and inserted some correction of prosody.

It may seem strange that Arabs regarded the texts, if remembered by heart, more reliable than those which had been put down on paper. Even the Qur'an had been properly fixed after the death of the Prophet *min sudur in-nas ila sutur in-nas*. The first collections of poetry were primarily recited to the disciples, who afterwards wrote them down. Even the grammarian Khalil Ibn Ahmad has not left a written book but dictated his findings from which Sibawaihi composed his "kitab". Greater and even stricter attention had to be paid to the correctness of the poetical texts, and paper-notes shifa were not thought to be safe from faulty reading. Nobody credited the scribes with accuracy. The living word, the declamation acquired from a master, was a surer guarantee against mistakes. This was only the start. The second generation proceeded more systematically.

To fix the living word collectors wandered out into the desert for collection, like Asma'i himself and Abu'Amr ash-Shaibani, who journeyed among the tribes, holding two inkpots ready in their hands (*dastaja*)[17] to secure a reliable control against possible mistakes. A vast bulk of work came into existence; Hisham Ibn al-Kalbi composed nearly a hundred and forty booklets; the number of Madaini's books on this topic was hardly less, and Haitham Ibn 'Adi produced some fifty. Most of these works perished in the turmoil of the times, but allusions prove that a veritable enthusiasm to preserve the legacy of ancient Arabia has captivated the scholars and learned circles of the initial period of Abbasid rule. Ibn Kalbi's work on the ancient idols has remained and the frequent insertion of pagan poetry betrays that he too dictated his text.

17. Anbari, *Nuzhat al-Alibba*, 63.

Arab historians and writers of other subjects seemed to be fond of embellishing their prose with poetical quotations, but their testimony must not be taken as decisive. Ibn Sallam sharply upbraids Ibn Ishaq, the original author of the Prophet's biography, saying: "Among those who spointed poetry, treating it abjectly, and amassed the sum of it was Ibn Ishaq, although people accepted poetry from him. He apologised for his demeanour, avowing that he had no knowledge of the poetry which was brought to him. He quoted poems of men and women even of Ad and Thamud, "Amaliq, Tasm and Jadis". Ibn Hisham faithfully followed Ibn Ishaq, but improved much of his testimony. Ibn Ishaq, for instance, mentioned Abu Sulyan Ibn al-Harith, the Quraishite, among those pagan poets who opposed Hassan Ibn Thabit and some Madinese poets, but Ibn Sallam belies him, stating that he hardly had poems, and neither Ishaq nor 'Ubaid Ibn Shariya and the like provide us with useful material for a knowledge of ancient poetry. The habit to confirm prosaic assertions with poetical pieces has continued almost to recent centuries ; at the same time collections of poetry were substantiated by historical data, anecdotes and wise sayings.

The chain of collections was uninterruptedly extended in the subsequent centuries and it gained in volume and capacity. The *Kitab-al-Aghani* profusely dealt with ancient poetry, sustaining it with copious references as to the authors and their credibility. This book belonged to the fourth century of the Flight, and Abu'l-Fraj had ample opportunity to depend on predecessors of the third and second centuries. The third century had already witnessed the collections of Abu Tammam, Buhturi, the critical *Bayan wa-l-Tabyin* of Jahiz, the *Kamil* of Mubarrad and Ibn Qutaiba's books. In their footsteps followed as-Sukkari, drawing from Ibn Habib and Ibn as-Sikkit, the Kufi and Abu Hatim as-Sijistani, and ar-Riyashi, the Basri scholars. All of them pursued the method of verifying the authenticity of the traditors.[18]

The literary monument of ancient Arabia at that time stood there complete in its magnitude and splendour, depicting

18. Shouqi Daif, *op. cit.*, 163.

a genuine society out of which the salvation for multitude of Islamic peoples grew up into a spreading tree with the revelations of the Qur'an. Mankind owes this prodigy to the Arab nation, as it owes to the marvellous stories of the Thousand and One Nights, and, last but not least, the dazzling pagan poetry of Arabia.

It appeared so inexhaustive and all-encompassing that many Orientalists could not believe in its absolute originality, and several scholars, subjecting it to scrutiny, expressly remitted it to the fabrication of the Muslim scholars. Noldeke (1864) and Ahlwardt (1879) were the precursors of sharp criticism of pagan poetry and they farsightedly amassed their evidence as to the improbability of its pagan conception. In their opinion only a few of the poems could be accepted as original. The structure and the vocabulary seemed to point to a later date and to an *Islamic* environment.

The most uncompromising critic, however, was my late friend Professor Margoliouth,[19] who flatly denied the originality of ancient Arabic poetry and definitely maintained that the whole bulk had been composed in Islamic surroundings, while its wordings were borrowed from the Qur'an. He asserted that the poems do not represent a pagan society, as the authors were Muslims, who did not understand the Trinity, and had renounced polytheism. They knew already the *Towhid*, the stories and the Qur'an with its final reckoning, the resurrection and some epithets of the Godhead. An audacious assumption in the face of contrarious evidence. We must reject Professor Margoliouth's other assertion, too, by which he finds fault with the uniformity of the language, which in his view, ought to betray vestiges of tribal discrepancies. We have pointed out that the language of the ancient poetry developed in harmonious parallel with that of the Quraish and in the course of the sixth and seventh centuries deployed into an artistic rhetorical idiom. Poets used this rhetorical idiom in declamation, while in familiar conversation they spoke their *'Amiya*, as all Arabs do in our days.

The French Orientalist Blachere,[20] too, takes umbrage

19. *The Origins of Arabic Poetry*, J.R A S , 1925.
20. Hist. d. la litl. Arabie.

at the uniformity of the language and although he acknowledges some poems as original, he still considers the sum-total a mixture of later forgery and addition, on which the experienced hand of Basri scholars is clearly visible. It must be conceded—and it did not escape the attention of medieval Arab critics—that the ancient poets suffered some alterations during the long timely travel from their birth onwards, but such alterations did not impair their innate character.

Dr. Taha Husain has trodden the path of the European critics, nay, he even has gone beyond their doubts and suspicion, denying totally the pagan origin of ancient poetry and attributing it to Islamic sources.[21] My distinguished friend is a born Egyptian, whose mother-tongue is the Arabic *'Amiya* and who has acquired a thorough knowledge of *Fusaha*, is more qualified to express opinions on literary matters than we who have studied this intricate idiom from books. Still, if he missed tribal dialectic elements in ancient poetry, he ignored the variations between the high and low consonants in the synonyms and in those rare words which the commentators were often at a loss to interpret.

As a matter of fact ancient poetry is folk-poetry in the strict sense of the word, similar to the products of other primitive peoples whose pure instinctive taste the pedantry of schoolmen has not yet throttled.

There are many specimens of intentional literary forgeries, like Macpherson's Songs of Ossian (1960), pretending to have been collected from the mouth of Scottish Highlanders in the Gaelic tongue and rendered into English. We find a series of literary falsifications of European historical monuments, sagas, chronicles, spurious memoirs and genealogical documents, which after careful scrutiny have either been rejected or verified.[22] We have to pursue the same method of scrutiny in regard to ancient Arabic poetry, and if we find interpolations which bear testimony to of a later socially distinct period, we are not entitled to declare the whole volume spurious. The most sagacious imitators of ancient style, portrayers of bygone

21. Al-Adab al-Jahili, 1927.
22. See a detailed account in Bernheim, "Historische Methode", 1924.

civilizations, always betray misconceptions and oversights which reveal their credulity. Pointing out such misconceptions, errors of deliberate travesty, medieval Arab critics like Ibn Sallam. al-Asma'i, 'Amr Ibn al-'Ala, and Mufaddal, repudiated a considerable portion of ancient poetry, without rejecting the whole as spurious. The Arab pioneers of criticism and sceptics observed that the poems of Aus Ibn Hajar were intermixed with the lines of his son Shuraih[23] and some doubted whether some verses were his or 'Abid Ibn al-Abras al-Asdi's.

Some later writers were not blameless in their uncritical acceptance of previous statements. Their motives were manifold. Ibn Qutaiba made a comparison between pagan and Islamic poets. His statements are more of a literary than historic interest. His *'Uyun al-Akhbar* aims at entertainment rather than criticism. In the *Amali* (Dictations) of al-Qali there are many spurious insertions. Most books which deal with biographies, general news of histories, like those of Ibn Hisham, Tabari, al-Waqidi, should be treated with caution. Abu'l-Faraj paid attention to the trustworthiness of his sources and often rejected the evidence of al-Kalbi or Khordadhbeh, if it appeared to him unreliable.

We referred several times to the characteristics of ancient poetry which even the long interval of time between its origin and its fixture in writing could not erase. Jahiz had already suggested that ancient poetry in the shape in which it remained for us came into being a century and a half before the advent of Islam. Its structure, however, is so accomplished that a long space of time must have elapsed since the first rudiments of poetic utterances were issued from Arabic bards. The rhyme and prosody—except in some rare instances—appear fully developed and faultless even in the oldest texts. The belief that prosody resulted from the measured pace of the camels as they trod on in the desert, is a poetical figure rather than a historical fact. The oldest form of prosody might have been the *rajz*, a short metre as it becomes folk song, but the elaborate poetry attributed to known authors displays scores of metres, manifold and diversified, while the number of poets belonging

23. Jahiz, *Kitab al-Hayawan* VI, 278.

to nearly all tribes, southern and northern, is in legions. It seems marvellous how many mature poets Arabia could produce and nurture. In this respect the Arabic language is unique.

In spite of the large number of poets and the respective literary output, ancient poetry is wanting in epic and didactic verses, except that some attributed to Afwah al-Audi. There are no traces of dramatic poetry, and even in the heyday of Arabic culture authors were not attracted by this form of literature and in spite of the extensive knowledge of Greek science, were not led to imitate drama or intensify the *maqamas* into stage-products.

On the other hand, ancient poetry towers high in its romantic aspects personalizing the feelings of joy or sorrow, depicting in a lifelike manner the scenery of the surroundings, expressing human amorous passion in a most naturalistic way, and wellnigh melting together with nature in the highly pictorial description of the elements like thunderstorms, floods, sunrise and the mystic powers of night. In all these fields ancient Arabian poetry proudly emulates the masterpieces of world literature.

Declamation has automatically rendered the style lyric and we find many instances in which the poet accompanied his recitation with a kind of melody. Abu'l-Faraj befittingly calls his great collection "book of songs" and mentions Sulaik Ibn Sulka, 'Alquama Ibn 'Abada al-Fahl and al-A'sha who were supposed to accompany their verses on a musical instrument called *sanj* (guitar) and gained the nickname *Sannaja al-'Arab.* Ibn Qutaiba quotes Abun-Najm's lines in which he speaks of a slave-girl:

"Sing oh girl, for this day belongs to youth
Sing with the melody of Imrul-Qais or 'Amr"
(namely, 'Amr Ibn Qamiya).

Ibn Rashiq quotes even Hassan Ibn Thabit:

"Sing with the poem if you recite it
For singing is the discipline of verse."

A primitive poetical song was the *huda* of the cameldri

vers: folk-poetry not dissimilar to its later more artistic literary sisters. The presence of singing girls in pagan Mecca was a common spectacle and many poetical lines refer to them.[24] It seems probable that the variety of poetical metres and their expansion into ampler forms was due to singing of the couplets. Later richer prosodial items developed from the popular *rajz*, which was of frequent use at every kind of emotional engagement, like digging a well, drawing water from it, wrestling matches, or vociferation of tribes. In course of time the original became impaired by mutilation or transformation to the extent of misleading Khalil Ibn Ahmad who could not recognise them as poetical metres.

The subjects of ancient poetry are, as all later scholars, among them Ibn Khaldun, showed, the mirror of desert life, with its harshness, horrors, sufferings and affections together with the tender ties of love, superstition, witchcraft and the blaze of artistic poetry. Men, women and children each shared the common fate We do not find a far-roving fancy in the lines of poetry : the poet rather acts as a painter who fixes everything he experienced around himself, and never departs from the reality, not even when he overflows with feeling. He does not analyse sentiments ; he simply interprets them with a rich storage of similes. The comparison has remained a ruling item of Arabic rhetoric, as a means of closer explanation. The life of the desert has made an indelible imprint on the ancient poetry. The comparatively narrow range of meanings, which we find in it, is a natural result of the very substance of the desert, where everything is on the move, where there is no repose, even the sand undulates at the storming of the wind, and tribes wander from pasturage to pasturage. When poets describe animals, they, as a rule, present them passing off flying, fleeting as apparitions, yet pictorial in details. This spirit of motion is one trait of ancient poetry, which is unique in its beauty and depth of imagery. The poet is not satisfied with the representation of the ruins and the emotions which the smell stirred in his mind, but he suddenly perceives the litter of the beloved one,

24. Shouqi Daif, *op. cit.*, 192.

as she departed with the caravan. What a lively plastic picture. He too has to abandon the place and new vistas open and alternate in quick succession. The result from this attitude is the incoherence of the *qasida* as a whole, the distinct lines of which seem to be independent gems of exquisite beauty. We may detect in this rambling over distant fields of apparitions the germ of epic, especially in the descriptive parts of adventures, as in the long poem of Shanfara's Lamiyat. But the velocity of observation and the individuality in the feelings of the poets presented a full ripening into epic frames.

If we conjure up in our imagination the scene at 'Ukaz where poets arrived to shine in full glory before their own tribe and others, we must keep in mind that they have come in full array with their newest poems. Some of these had been polished and improved several times and even recited to some friendly rival, till they reached full satisfaction. Some longer *qasidas*—so testifies Jahiz,—have occupied the poet a whole year to finish them. The ex-tempore at 'Ukaz was only the final stage, where the poet had retained his lines in his memory and recited the complete whole of often scattered lines. These lines might have been composed at several instances under diverse impressions and recited to friends, who remembered variants of the finally accepted version. The epithets attached to some poets seem to point to the process of amendment and revision of the text. Thus Imrul-Qais at-Taghlibi gained the by-name the "refiner" (*muhalhil*), 'Amr Ibn Sa'd was nicknamed the "great variegator" (*muraqqish*), while his nephew remained the small variegator. Tufail became the "adorner" (*muhabbir*) and 'Alqama boasted of the appellation of "stallion" or "gloriously successful". Many poets received the by-name of "distinguished" (*nabigha*) who produced poetry only after careful sifting (*muthaqqib* and *mutanakhkhil*).

Posterity may justly admire the perfection of style and wording of ancient Arabic poetry, which was for centuries the impersonation of power of diction and of descriptive beauty and,—if read in the original,—still elicits the wonder of every lover of human art in the East and West.*

* *Islamic Culture*, An English Quarterly (Hyderabad, Vol. XXXVIII, No. I, January 1964, pp. 1-8.

2

Role of the Turks in Islam

Central Asia, that desiccated highland of roaming nomads was probably the original home of a race of peoples whom we generally call *Turks* but who as far as their ethnographic appearance and habits of life are closely connected with the Mongolians with whom they also have an affinity of language. Their history is older than written documents. Their existence as a factor in the history of Asia far precedes our classification of races is anthropological or linguistic sense. The Chinese chronicles mention them as early as 1300 B.C., and the role which they played in later centuries was distinctly foreshadowed by those conglomerations of peoples who in the second century B.C. harassed the Northern frontier of China. These *Hiung-nu* probably the Huns of the Middle Ages, and the *Yuen-Yuen* probably the Avars, and the *Tu-kiu* were warlike tribes uniting under one powerful leader who conducted their marauding expeditions against strangers and relatives alike. National or even racial consciousness did not exist ; and in the hordes of these restless spirits of the steppes many non-Turkish elements also fought. The people of the Middle Ages, like the ancients, had no ear for linguistic differences ; it was the cult, the habits of life, which attracted their attention and they defined peoples according to their appearances and called them Scythians or Hiung-nu or Turks without any attempt at a linguistic definition. The language of these hordes was not uniform: Uralian, Iranian

and Mongolian were represented in their ranks, but the form of organisation and their primitive creed of fire-worship, Shamanism and Buddhism, later on Christianity and Islam, changing and mixing with the new admixture of blood and their characteristic nomadic culture, distinguished them from the Iranian settlers, the Chinese rice-cultivators, the Hindus, and the Christian Aryans of Europe. This form of organisation, which crystallised around a leader who had undisputed sway over the tribes united under him, which based its economic and State existence on intimidating and subduing peoples settled in fruitful territories and abandoning to them the peaceful pursuits of industry while they restricted themselves to the management of State affairs, we may call *Turanian*. Turanian does not imply a linguistic definition, as many Ural-Altaian and Aryan peoples were comprised within this term, but it implies contradistinction to Iranian, to the settled town-dwelling population, with a distinct cult and theology and social class organisation, one ever crystallising, breaking up, recrystallising; roaming; hordes without culture of their own but with elements of culture from all the peoples with whom they came in contact. The language of the ruling class was in most cases Turkish. It seems very probable that the mother-tongue of Attila and Rayan and even Chengiz Khan was Turkish, and the few remains of written culture such as the golden treasure of Attila in the Vienna Museum bear Turkish inscriptions; moreover the language of the inscriptions of Orkhon and Yenisei is also Turkish.

This type of society, very active and mobile, enabled the Turanian to cover distances from the confines of China as far as Eastern Europe, and its characteristic openmindedness admitted the impression of all cultures. They carried Nestorian Christianity and Persian fire-worship into China; they are responsible for the overland intercourse between China and India; later they transplanted Islam to Europe. They exported Chinese silk to Byzantium, which trade brought them into collision with Persia and into alliance with Byzantium and Abyssinia, at the time when the Prophet was born. It is characteristic that the most ancient Buddhist temple in Japan contains Persian objects which must have been brought across

Asia by Turkish caravans.

It was the awe and respect inspired by personality which created the States of the Turanians. They were never nations—as the constituting elements belonged to two continents—but they were ready and subservient to obey a personality who brought them into a camp. The tent of the virile and active personality, a genius in strategy, was the pivot of empires and the Turks understood how to obey and how to command ; and in no time the radiation of the personal will brought millions into obedience. It was this personal will which kept the discordant elements of a Turanian State together, and when such a will ceased to act or when another virile personality challenged it, the empires broke down as suddenly as they arose and gave way to new formations on the same basis. The geographic configuration and the spirit of the peoples which resulted from it and its history has produced an imprint on their character too deep to be changed easily. For long centuries every Turanian people has set up the same type of State-organisation ; the rule of the armed camp over an intimidated population, and out of this rule a mixed culture sprang which was called after the founder of the dynasty and not the nation. Turanian nations received their names from great personalities.

To become a personality was the ambition of the Turanian youth. A personality, not in abstract thinking or meditation like the Hindus, or in sacrificing this earthly world for communion with the Absolute, but a personality of warlike activity, to conquer, to rule, to act. And the essence of politics is activity ; so the Turks, being born politicians, have created and destroyed more States than any other people of the world. The Seljuks, who form an insignificant family through fortune and valour rose to the sovereignty of three empires, gave the impetus to another Turkish clan, that of the Ghaznevids, to create a realm in India. The knights readily responded to the call of any hero, and while establishing empires in Persia, Syria, Asia Minor and India, they were so unmindful of their nationality that they imbibed Persian culture and became Persianized in taste. The Shah-namah which immortalises the feats of Persians at the cost of their Turanian foes was written for a Turkish Prince, and the Seljuk monarchs of Asia Minor

had its noble lines engraved in their palaces.

It was the merit of the Seljuk Turks to keep up the tottering Abbasid empire against the Crusaders in Syria. They established a kingdom in Asia Minor, for more than two centuries planted the seeds of Islamic culture. At Konia, the ancient Iconium, a few miles distant from the caves of St. Paul, one of the greatest Persian poets, Jelal ud-din Rumi, lies buried under a cupola of green tiles. The schools and palaces of the Seljuks, in Persian style with an admixture of Byzantine Greek, commemorate their exquisite taste and love of learning and art.

The Byzantine empire, which was the extreme outpost of Christianity towards the East, was convulsed by the discords of sects and impoverished by an unparalleled maladministration. Vexatious exaction of taxes and sensual court life, with a system of favouritism, sapped the vital forces of this once mighty empire, and the long duration of its agony was due rather to the inertia of a system and to the temporary effort of some martial emperors than to its intrinsic power. Its destiny was sealed, its fertile territories with a dissatisfied population readily lent themselves to any conqueror who brought rule and discipline.

The Mongol wave, which started, like so many of its kind, from the frontiers of China, pushed forward as far as the Alps, stirred up the cauldron of Asia, destroying some peoples and dislodging others, and drove small hordes of Turks belonging to the tribe of Kay Khan across the Caucasus into Asia Minor. They sought shelter at the court of the Seljuk 'Ala ud-din Kay Kobad, and he allowed them, as a reward for their services, to settle near Angora. Further services to the Seljuks brought an aggrandisement of their fiefs, which extended towards the West of Asia Minor. The Seljuk empire in Anatolia was near to its fall. The renewed attacks of the Mongols did not rally its vassals to its succour but on the contrary the local chieftains hoped to aggrandise their territory at the cost of the empire. The Turks of the Kay Khan conquered fortresses from the Greeks on the North-Western shores of Asia Minor and by an adroit alliance with some local Christian vassals soon mastered Aynegol, Bilejik and Yar Hissar. The Kay

Khanlis became one of the most important vassals of the tottering Seljuk kingdom.

The Kay Khanlis were Turks like those who had settled in Asia Minor before them ; their dialect was only slightly different, but while the Seljuks had been Muslims for centuries, these newcomers still adhered to their primitive creed of nomads. The legend of the marriage of their chief, Ertogrul's son Osman, permits us to think that Islam was adopted by them only in Asia Minor where they had come into a Muslim atmosphere. Osman, who about 1300 declared his independence of the Seljuks and pursued his conquests against the Greeks, established good government throughout his dominions, which at his death in 1326 extended southwards to Kutahia, northwards to the sea of Marmara and as far as the valleys of the Sakaria and Adranos.

After the collapse of the Seljuks a number of vassals became independent lords, not recognising the sovereignty of Karaman Oghlu, who considered himself the natural successor of the Seljuks in their possessions. Aydin, Sarukhan, Menteshe, Kermian and the rest installed an independent court in their dominions and a great many Turkoman tribes roamed in the valleys. The house of Osman, which by his ascendency firmly established itself in the north-west, acquired a geographical superiority over the rest of the rival clans which were militarily much stronger. The Karmans were shut off from the sea, and their expansion into a kingdom was rendered hazardous by the rivals surrounding them while those of Aydin, Menteshe, and Kermian were much too near the sea and were exposed to punitive crusades following their raids. The Ottomans of Osmanlis, who like other Turks henceforward called themselves after their brave leader, were posted in the most fertile territories of Anatolia, in the vicinity of the seat of the Byzantine Empire; with easy access to Europe, to those provinces whose exasperated populations were unwilling to make resistance. Osman and his successors Orkhan and Murad could easily have been led into the temptation to conquer Asia Minor and to aspire to the inheritance of the Seljuk kingdom. Such a policy would have led to disastrous wars with rivals and, in default of a military

base of operation towards the East and South, without a fleet, exposed to the flanking enterprises of the Aegean Turks, would have been the grave of the House of Osman. The geographical situation, between the sea of Marmara and the highlands of Central Anatolia, pointed towards an encircling movement round the capital, and while the Ottomans were undisturbed by their Eastern rivals they transferred the centre of their activity to the Balkans. Very early, already in 1866, they advanced on their marauding expeditions as far as the lower Danube and defeated Louis of Anjoi, who escaped with his bare life. Adrianople and Philipopolis had fallen into their hands a few years earlier. Brusa had been the capital of the young State for forty years only and the centre of gravity was soon on the Balkan peninsula, with Adrianople as capital. Europe was alarmed and gathered troops desparately to expel the Ottomans when, their dangerous nature unsuspected, they were still tolerated by their Asiatic rivals. It was only after Muhammad II, the conqueror, had captured Constantinople in 1453 that he turned his victorious arms against the Anatolian princes.

The wave of victory and conquest remained unchecked. In 1492 the Turks ravaged Syria, and while the last stronghold of Islam fell in Spain, the Turks more than compensated for the loss. While, the Moors in Spain lost their attacking force at the battle of Tours, and lingered on in Spanish towns developing and ripening the fruits of Islamic learning, the new enemy of Europe from the East pushed forward to the gates of Vienna, to the Atlantic Ocean and to the Northern shores of the Black Sea, while victory over Egypt crowned the head of the Turkish Sultans with the laurels of Khadim ul-Harameyn. From a small village community, in two centuries, a world-power had arisen which in its extent, wealth of resources and variety of culture equalled any of the great empires of history. Islamic in religion and culture, the Turkish empire breathed the spirit of the central Asiatic steppes. Greek, Kurd, Persian, Arab, Albanian, Slav, Hungarian and German and a variety of religions were represented among its subjects. The very name of Turks became awe-inspiring and it was thought impossible to defeat or to

destroy them. What human efforts failed to attain, time achieved in its course,—time which was helped by the intrinsic weakness of the Turanian system of rule and government. The year 1600 is the high watermark in the ascendency of the Ottoman power. A century later it was deprived of its Hungarian provinces and, from this time on, reverses followed in quick succession, and so uninterruptedly that the cause of the discomfiture cannot be looked for in the incapacity of unfortunate generals or in the higher genius of the adversary, but in an organic disease of the structure of the State, of its society, and of its methods of rule, and of its spirit. On the other hand as we have to deal with a State antagonistic to Europe, we have to search for the causes which first weakened Europe in face of the Ottomans, then for those which brought about its superiority in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Thus the causes were both external and internal.

The Ottomans during their ascendency had to fight nations from a favourable strategical position, nations whose State-machinery was debilitated and who could not oppose the better-equipped and enthusiastic Turks with equal forces. Christian Europe was at loggerheads, the little States of the Balkans were jealous neighbours, and when they met the Turks in a united army on the battlefield this jealousy more than once, caused heavy discomfiture. The whole of Europe could not muster 40,000 men of a regular army to oppose the Turks, whose Janissaries soon became the most efficient fighters of Europe. The federal system of Europe decentralised the States and weakened their power at the cost of haughty nobles, and the States depended for their policy and much more for their strategy on the nobility, who considered warfare a chivalrous game and not a stake of the fortune of nations. The backbone of the Turkish army was the Janissary, an intrepid well-discipline veteran who, in constant training under strict and brave officers, was a blind tool in the hands of the Sultan. Eclectic as the culture of the Turanians was their strategy and military genius were equally opportune. The strategy of the central Asiatic steppes was borrowed from the ancient Persians but the Turk, a born soldier, had a sharp eye to notice the changes of the time and to adopt any inno-

vation in strategy which was necessitated by new inventions and new situations. The Turkish army used the most modern weapons of all Europe while the single State which it attacked possessed only a partially up-to-date equipment. They soon found out the importance of artillery and improved the different calibres to such perfection that no fortification could withstand their destructive powers. At the siege of Constantinople bronze guns of 45 cm. calibre were used. The fortifications in Eastern Europe were built against horsemen and light artillery; with perpendicular high walls; but the Turkish heavy artillery soon necessitated a new system of slanting lower ramparts which came into use at the end of the sixteenth century. Besides these technical causes of superiority the Turks were superior in their enthusiastic spirit, elated after every victory, enriched with the spoils of warfare and animated to fight in the path of Allah. Islam and its martial spirit was one of the greatest motives in the uninterrupted success of the Turks. They had fought, as idolators before, the sake of rapine and glory, but the propagation of the faith gave a moral aim to their valour and enhanced their fighting qualities. The first Sultans were bred in the simple and healthy atmosphere of the camp, shared the intrepidity of their soldiers, and excelled their contemporaries in military genius.

When the Ottoman power reached its climax in extension of territories it had to face more numerous and stronger enemies than at the outset of its victorious career, when only the decaying Byzantine empire and the Balkans were encountered. Its strategic situation became weaker as it gradually extended from Anatolia and the lines of communication became longer. The seventeenth century created an altered Europe. Discoveries and inventions, the scientific method of research, the termination of the wars of Reformation and the issue of strong national States with a distinct consciousness of their own, ripened a more capable species of Europeans than the feudal Middle Ages with their scanty and illdigested learning. State alliances prepared the way for campaigns, and European regular armies, with technical superiority and spiritually advanced, proved dangerous and unconquerable foes. The discovery of America, and the vendibility of its products in

the seventeenth century, transferred the commerce of the world from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic Ocean. The circumnavigation of Africa and the changes in the routes of world-traffic materially impaired the development of Turkey, as it became, so to speak, excluded from the intercourse of progressive nations. Italy also suffered economically from the same reason, but was able to preserve its cultural treasures and even develop them, while in Turkey, with the stoppage of conquest the sources of cultural enrichment from the subdued and highly endowed peoples also came to an end. Turkey became isolated, cut off from the circulation of new ideas; and while these new ideas mightily revived Europe and led her to study on a comparative basis the cultures of the East, Turkey adhered to antiquated systems and decayed institutions. While, since the Reformation, the European spirit shelved superstitious and clerical ideas, Turkey fell a prey to a privileged class, who tried to stifle the spirit of development in Islam.

One of the internal causes which weakened Turkey was that, with the increase of its territory, it was impossible to control the long lines of communication, and in order to secure connections with the frontiers the intermediate territories were granted a kind of semi-autonomy. Such was the case with the Crimea, Wallachia and Hungary, while Arabia, North Africa, Egypt, Tripoli and Algiers, were semi-independent provinces. The provinces seemed to be loosely attached to the motherland, Asia Minor. The larger the empire the more variegated it became as to the nationalities and religions, which had no common ties with the ruling nation. Internal dissensions and revolts began to weaken the body-politic.

The greatest and most deeply operative factor in the dismemberment of the Turkish State was the decay of the ruling spirit which was embodied in the personality of the ruler. We have seen above that the Turanian type of State was based entirely on personality, and this type could easily be combined with the religion of Islam, which, though democratic in its spirit, did not prevent autocrats from concentrating in their hands all the executive power of the State. The Caliph,

as highest guardian of the Sheriat, and the Sultan, as temporal ruler of the Turks, combined in creating a unique factor in the person of the ruler who practically owned the whole empire and whose slaves (*qul*) the whole population were. We shall observe the organisation of the State-machinery later; suffice it to say here that with the weakness of the ruler, the whole system began to crumble. The first great Sultans down to Selim II, who received the nickname *mest* (drunken), were active warlike sovereigns who held the administration of the country firmly in their hands and conducted military operations in person. Of eight Sultans after Selim, five did not accompany a single military enterprise, but became invisible to their people and spent their lives in the harem. The princes were first murdered, out of fear of sedition, later imprisoned for life. When any of them ascended the throne the life they had spent among eunuchs and irresponsible people had totally unmanned them for the serious duties of the State. The Sultans became puppets in the hands of a demoralised officialdom; bribery, intrigues, and slander began to give direction to the history of the palace; and the external governors, taking advantage of the demoralised state of the centre, sought to enrich themselves in any illegal way. The corruption of of Byzantium and sensual amusements invaded the magnificent State-machinery which had been created by the able hands of the first Sultans, and undermined the foundation of the empire built up by the bloody sacrifices of the Turkish nation. The external expansion of the empire was stopped; a rapid decrease of the territory caused a fearful deficit in the treasury; while luxury was growing amid the reckless and wanton official class. Revolts, discomfiture and heavy indemnities inflicted an alarming burden on the remaining part of the people, which had to labour under a mainstay of the army and the pledge of victory, associated themselves with Bektashis and other turbulent elements, and became a standing menace to tranquillity till the great reformer, Mahmud II, had to destroy them. The administration of the empire, even if it had been conducted in an ordinary way, was out of date; but it was impossible to supplant it with an efficient system on account of the resistance of a fanaticised populace and

corrupted officialdom.

Organic was the disease which penetrated from above gradually into the lower strata of society, and for long centuries society was subjected to moral strains which no nation could endure with impunity. Rotten as the State administration was, sullied with bribery as the Turkish generals had become, the pure simplicity and honesty of the people remained unimpaired even to our days.

What were the elements, and what the characteristic aspects of the culture of the Ottomans? Coming from Central Asia towards the West, they picked up elements of culture from the peoples with whom they came in contact. Islam in the Persianised form and even Shi'ite propensities, and Sufism already organised in fraternities, attracted the imagination of the Turks. Asia Minor had for centuries been the meeting-place of various cultural influences; pagan remnants of ancient times. Byzantine, Greek, Seljuk-Persian, amalgamated into something new, in which we can analyse the component parts; but the whole is different and more than the mere agglomeration of elements. Asia Minor became Turkicised during the rule of the Seljuks; and the Kay-Khanli newcomers, whose number hardly exceeded 2,000 horsemen, could rely on an adequately large number of Turks to be used as a national reservoir for military expeditions and for colonising the newly conquered territories. Polygamy did very good service to the Turkish people, as the immense sacrifices of constant warfare could be repaired by a speedy increase. And still the Turkish people had never been able to fill those territories with its own kin and to absorb their native populations into one national unit.

The structure of the Turkish State has from the beginning maintained a splendid isolation of the ruling class from the people. Nationalism in our modern sense has not entered into the mind of the people, and while Arabic Islam has, by propagating the faith, Arabicised foreign races, the Turks did not Turkicise the Balkans, where they were only settlers and did not build up a uniform *nation* even in Anatolia. A strange duality characterises the Turkish State-structure, which cuts across the ties of blood and seems to observe the bonds

of the Islamic religion only in the service of the Sultan. The service of the Sultans admitted under the formality of conversion to Islam any foreign element to the government. This was an inducement to amalgamation and in the history of the Ottomans voluntary acceptance of the faith has largely contributed to the ranks of the ruling class. The heavier burdens imposed on Christians might have moved the agricultural tenants also to enter the fold of Islam. So in Central Anatolia the Karamans, the Western Anatolians, are not Turkish in blood but have become Turkish by religion and then by language also. The Turks, when they set up their empire, conformed to their electric activity in administration, which was carried on almost wholly by converted Muslims. An artificial ruling class came into existence which, irrespective of blood, was Islamised in the service of the Sultan. As time and conquest went on this class became more numerous and further removed from the people It is a strange paradox that the Turkish people, which had excelled from time immemorial in conquest and administration, created a conquering army and an administrative body out of non-Turks who considered themselves alien and superior to the Turkish people themselves They called themselves Osmanli, a characteristic appellation which meant the adherents of the dynasty of Osman, and despised the common people, whom they called *Turk*. At the head of this official classes of the *Osmanlis* stood the Sultan, the ruler and the unconditional owner of the lives and wealth of the people The idea of this autocracy was the embodiment of fatherly care and absolute power of disposition over the forces of the people for the common benefit. It reflects the idea of an army where the commander provides the necessaries for the forces and disposes of them according to his insight. The people were his slaves. In the beginning leaders like Osman Orkhan, and Murad bore the old Turkish title: *Bey*; it was Yildirim who took the titles of *Sultan* and *Khan*. The fatherly tendency of the Turkish rule is shown by the simple habits which the first Sultans observed. They followed in their habits the old customs of the people. It was with aggrandisement in territory and the increase of palace officials that pomp and luxury and the separation of

the Sultan from his advisers set in. Until Muhammad II the Sultan sat among his Vezirs in council. Once a peasant entered the hall with some complaint "Which of you is the Sultan"? he exclaimed. From that time on the Sultan sat behind the window and listened to the discussion of his advisers. From the time of Suleyman onward the Chief Vezir reported the decisions of the council to the Sultan, who did not condescend to attend it any more. His will was the last decision and it is strange to notice that with the decline of the empire, as province after province was served, the haughtiness and seclusion of the Sultans increased, and at the same time the mischievous influence of a rotten and demoralised palace gained mastery over their will. The first warlike Sultans transmitted their spirit and their inheritance to their sons; from Ahmed I the law of inheritance was altered and the succession to the throne was continued in the eldest member of the family.

The imperial council, which was the advising body to the Sultan, consisted of the Grand Vezir (Sadr A'zam) the two Qazi-askers, the Qadi of Constantinople, the commander of the Janissaries, the Nishanji (keeper of the Seal) the treasurer, and the commander of the regiments. The council met every day in the morning and began with proposals and reading of documents by the Reis-ul-kuttab. The decisions were protocoled by the Hojegyin and forwarded to the respective officers. The council was the final forum for important law cases also. After the meeting, the Sultan received his grand Vezir separately and the other Vezirs in a body, and listened to their proposals. Appointments and investitures with the robe of office also took place on this occasion. This procedure fell into decay in the seventeenth century, and the meeting took place only occasionally, in the palace of the Grand Vezir or of the Sheykh ul-Islam. When Mahmud II tried to restore order in the administration by appointing Ministers, they had to meet twice a week under the presidency of the Grand Vezir. The Vezirs received, as a sign of their dignity, three horse-tails; the Grand Vezir was honoured by four; before the tent of the Sultan seven standards of horse-tails were set up. The retinue of a Vezir consisted sometimes

of several thousands.

As to the technicalities of the Ottoman administration the civil, military and judicial branches were pretty well mixed; but still there was some attempt at classification. The empire was divided into *vilayets*, *sanjaks* and *kazas*. The heads of the *vilayets* and *sanjaks* were at the same time military officers, surrounded by a military retinue, and in case of war led the regiments supplied by the feudal chiefs. The head of a *sanjak* was authorised to employ the emblem of one horse-tail, the head of a *vilayet* two. Above the beys of Anatolia (Asiatic Turkey) and Rumelia (European Turkey) there were two *beyler-beys* respectively, who at the same time acted as commanders of the army corps. If the command of the two flanks was not entrusted to the royal princes these two beyler-beys led them on the battle-field. These important administrative posts were filled by the system called *devshirme*, which meant the carrying off of Christian children from the Balkans and elsewhere, and educating them in Islam and for their special duties They were closely attached to the person of the Sultan.

As to the other important posts we may mention the office of the Diwan, which registered the decision of the councils and forwarded it to the respective offices ; the land registry (*defter i haqani*) and the treasury. The head of the Diwani was the Reis-ul-kuttab or chief scribe who executed the correspondence with the legations and took part in international negotiations.

One of the most important offices was that of the Nishanji or registrar who issued assignments of land, sealed imperial decrees and registered newly conquered territories. The Defterdar corresponded to a finance minister. First there was only one ; later the European and Asiatic provinces each received one defterdar. They controlled taxation and expenditure.

The class which in Islamic countries played the greatest role, that of the learned ('ulema) was instituted by Mohamed II. At the beginning their duties were restricted to the army, as many judges (*kazi-asker*) and up to the end of the fifteenth century there was no independent post for a chief mufti. It was customary to transfer this duty to the kadi either of Brusa

or Constantinople, or to any other learned man who was subservient to the will of the Padishah. By this system of appointment of an official mufti the independence of this important factor of legislation greatly suffered and, while some steadfast Sheikh-ul-Islams were capable of checking the extravagance of the Sultans by their word of veto, the majority were feeble tools in their hands and used to give *fatwas* which were not in accordance with the spirit of the Sheri'at.

The class of "The Learned" constituted the purely Islamic element in the Turkish ruling society. Their members were not recruited from Christian children kidnapped in the occupied lands, but were descended from Turks and Arabs, and later formed a kind of opposition to the officials of foreign blood. The fear of inteference in their authority on the part of the Sultan or the army led to the custom of preserving the profession in the family; and so children were already called 'ulema in their cradle (*Beshik 'ulema-lighi*). This abuse, which originated in self-defence against encroachments of officialdom, greatly deteriorated the learning and honour of the 'ulema.

By the nature of the Ottoman State the most important class and the mainstay of its power was the army. The Ottoman State, when it was still a village community in Bithynia relied on its military organisation in the feudal system which, similarly to that of the West, enjoined military duties on the holders of fiefs. Very early in the fourteenth century Orkhan and Murad I, in order to free themselves from the caprices of their feudatories, and in order to control any insubordination, resorted to a plan which immediately elevated the Ottomans to the rank of the first fighting power of the world. A new army, *yeni cheri*, was instituted. A popular legend brings the establishment of this standing army into connection with the antinomian dervish fraternity of the Bektashis; but recent research has proved that the Bektashis slunk into the barracks of the Janissaries in the sixteenth century only, when they tried to free themselves from suspicion of heresv.

II

The Janissary force was a physically and morally indomitable, absolutely reliable army of unfortunate men who, kidnapped as children, had been brought up in austere surroundings, where they did not know the love of parents or the longing for a fatherland. The only morale they were taught was obedience to their master, the only ambition they fostered was that of promotion and riches. Such a reckless band of men was well fitted to conduct the conquest of empires. The new army could roughly be divided into seven classes, all of which were slaves of the palace (*qapu qulu*), who were stationed in barracks and received a fixed salary and daily allowances from the imperial treasury. The bulk of this regular army was formed of infantry. It consisted of 196 battalions ; the strength of a battalion varied from 60 to 2,000 men, in different times. The war footing of the Janissary was in the time of Mohamed II some 12,000, in the time of Mohamed III 40,000 ; and it reached its greatest strength during the rule of Selim III when it comprised 110,000 men. Their dress varied in colour according to the regiment and the service, and their regiments chosen signs such as keys, a fish or ship's anchors, which were painted on their flags and often tattooed on their arms and calves. Regimental musicians accompanied them and the military ceremonies, traditional to Janissaries, were performed. The daily wage of a Janissary was one *aqche*, a coin containing one-third of a dirhem of silver, at the time of Orkhan, which rose in course of time to five or six *aqche*, while some who distinguished themselves received even up to eight *aqche*. Later, when, through the maladministration of finances, the silver coins were adulterated and lost part of their value, the daily wage was raised accordingly to twenty *aqche*. Besides these wages each battalion received its regular supply of bread, fat, millet, candles and uniforms. Their rations were paid every three months, each period being named by the initial letters of the lunar months—Muharram, Safar, Rebi-ul-Evvel, Rebiula 'khir, Jamadhi-Evvel, ve A'khir.

The payment of rations were effected on a Tuesday before the great hall of the council chamber. The battalions strode

up in military order, saluted the grand Vezir and his retinue and then at a sign given by the hem of their commander's robe, sat down to eat the food (soup, rice and meat) prepared for them in the kitchen of the palace, the acceptance of the food signifying their obedience to their master. After taking their meal they again gathered before the hall, whereupon their captains shouted out the *gulbank* (war cry), crossing their arms on their breasts.

> "Allah, Allah, no God besides him. With barehead and pure breast take blood, my sword. Many heads are rolled off here and nobody asks why. By God, our force and our sword bring loss to the enemy ; our servitude belongs to the Sultan. Threes, sevens, forties, the Mohammedan war-cry, the light of the Prophet, the generosity of 'Ali, to our *pir* and master Haji Bektashi Veli we shout 'Hua!' "

After this, at a given sign, the soldiers all rushed to assumed spots where they seized leather bags full of coins which they took to their barracks and distributed. From this ceremony the 65th battalion was expected, for this battalion was suspected of having been an accomplice in the murder of Prince Osman. As the Sultan himself was considered a member of the first battalion of Janissaries, he too betook himself after a few days to the barracks in the dress of the Janissaries, took his salary and accepted a glass of *sherbet*, sitting on horseback at the gate, from the hands of the commander, showing thereby his perfect trust in their fidelity.

This closed body of troops did not admit anybody into its ranks who had not special antecedents. Their *esprit de corps* was unshaken by their homogeneous structure ; and only at the end of the sixteenth century could jugglers and clowns be added to their ranks as a reward for their services at imperial entertainments. From this time on all kinds of unreliable external elements slipped into the Janissary barracks, dissolved the old bonds and ruined the morale. The Janissaries began to marry, lodged outside the barracks, and pursued some trade in time of peace. The formerly intrepid and austere troops

gradually changed into a turbulent, riotous mob which endangered the tranquillity of the realm, while it became useless on the battlefield ; and, after, several attempts at reorganisation failed, it had to be destroyed in 1826.

Besides the standing army there was an equally strongly organised force in the feudal landlords, the *timar* and *ziamet* and *khas* who, according to the extent of their territory, sent well equipped and trained soldiers, infantry and cavalry, to the camp. At the height of the Ottoman power it could raise without any extra expense a cavalry force of 140,000 sabres. No European power up to the Napoleonic wars could muster a force so terrific. The feudal lords received their fiefs as reward for services to the Sultan ; some of them were given for a life-time, some in perpetuity but transferable at decrease. While in Europe feudalism, by its inalienable hereditary rights, soon became a danger to the central government, in Turkey the feudal chiefs were always dependent on their overlords. The strength which the Ottoman Empire derived from its feudal system was weakened by the general decay and laxity of morals. The influence of women in the palace invested many unworthy elements with possessorial rights ; many feudal lords spent their time far from their estates. It became the custom to farm out the estates, and this was the ruin of most of them. A reckless exploitation of the soil was soon followed by barrenness and lack of produce, and led to a general improverishment of the country.

The Janissaries and the *sipahi* feudal cavalry formed the bulk of the army ; for reconnoitring and other minor services irregular or temporarily engaged troops were utilised. They were armed with rifles, or laid mines and dug ditches around the camp and in fortresses. Most of them were Christians, as those auxiliaries which had to be supplied by the subdued Balkanic peoples.

Turkey, which commanded the whole Mediterranean in the sixteenth century, produced a galaxy of victorious sea-captains like Khaireddin Barbarossa and his son Hasan, Piale Torgüd, Sali Reis, and Piri Reis. The first *tersana* or ship-yard was established at Gallipoli, which was, under the reign of Suleyman, transferred to the Golden Horn. The Kapudan

Pasha, the chief commander of the fleet, was next in rank to the Grand Vezir. All the Turkish sea officers and men were sons of Christian parents. Apart from their daring exploits, which terrified Europe, some of them were very able and scientific writers, like Piri Reis, who compiled a sea-atlas (bahriye) of the Aegean and Mediterranean, every nook of which he had explored, with an account of the currents, soundings, landing-places and harbours. Another literary seaman was Sadi 'Ali who was driven ashore in India and travelled back to Turkey by way of Sind, Baluchistan, Khorasan and Persia. He wrote an account of his three years' journey, and he was the author of a mathematical work on the use of the astrolabe and a book, *The Ocean*, (Muhit), on the navigation of the Indian seas.

Perfect organisation of the work in the shipyard enabled the Ottomans to turn out a fleet fully manned with specially trained sailors and soldiers, a group of which had to serve on the feudal land-tenure system. Slaves, prisoners and criminals were attached to the mechanical service of the ship, and were treated as galleyslaves.

The whole army, in contradistinction to those of other nations, had its peculiar uniform with gaudy colours ; close fighting did not necessitate the dissimulation of khaki. Head-gear played the most conspicuous part. Bulging trousers with different coloured gaiters covering the calves, and heelless high boots buttoned at the side made long and forced marches easy. While marching, the wings of the overcoat were tucked into the belt to give the legs easier play.

The weapons of the Ottomans were a mixture of Asiatic clubs, maces, anxes, swords with European firearms. The first firearms were guns; then came rifles, their first use of which was probably at the battle of Kossowo (1389). But the Ottomans, who utilised the services of foreigners for the improvement of their army, seen outstripped their enemies in casting heavy guns. Revolving guns and a kind of machine-guns were effectively used against attacks of cavalry.

On the declaration of war the different contingents gathered at appointed places. In campaigns towards the West the line of march was Adrianople, Sofia, Nish, Belgrade ; towards Russia, Adrianople, Sofia, Badadagi, Irakchi and along

the Dniester. Certain trunk roads had to be followed in order to secure food-supply for the troops, and these fixed lines predetermined the places of combat, which were large plains with surrounding hills which each party tried to occupy. The Turkish armies had to keep to certain lines of alimentation. The army started on a campaign accompanied by an immense retinue of carterers, workmen, singers and jugglers. The camp of a Turkish army presented the most picturesque sight imaginable. Races and costumes from all parts of the world, the whole bazaar of an Eastern town with its manifold products and entertainments, marched along with the fighters. The East marched up and down to Vienna across the Balkans innumerable times

The tactics of the Turks were naturally based on their military system and have till modern times borne the imprint of the life on the Central Asiatic steppes. Originally it was the tactical deployment of the ancient Persians, who developed a system of co-operation between cavalry and infantry, which system was followed by the Turanian peoples. The battle array was based on a strong centre of infantry protected in front by artillery and on the flank by strong squadrons of cavalry The attack was begun frontally by daring skirmishes of irregular cavalry (*akinji*) who feigned discomfiture and fled in dismay and dragged the vainglorious pursuers into the semicircle of the artillery, which suddenly opened fire on them as the flying irregulars deployed right and left while the flanking cavalry scattered them by encircling movements and the steadfast Janissary infantry rolled them up. The defeated enemy was hotly pursued and annihilated. These tactics, successfully carried out, resulted in complete victory and the enemy succumbed entirely. One encounter decided the fate of kingdoms. The Turks are born soldiers and in the nineteenth century, when European civilisation created long distance firearms and accordingly the traditional tactics had to be abandoned, the Turks easily adopted the new system, in which too they proved equal, if not superior, to any nation. Islam gained its bravest fighters in the Turks, and they are still productive of military genius.

Finance was the weakest point of the Ottoman Empire.

As if soldiers were by nature no economists, they could not balance the income and expenses of the State. There was no regular budget, and the whim of the Sultan could destroy the soundest basis of finance. The income of the State was, according to the Muslim law, a tenth, the salt dues, the capitation tax and the purses given by subdued or auxiliary powers, and one-fifth of the spoils. In the period of ascendency the income far exceeded the expenditure. Then it became the custom to distribute large sums to the Janissaries and the palace expenses rose to an uncontrollable height. No regular book keeping was established, the provinces were ransacked and impoverished, and with the advent of the new era the purely agricultural Turkey had to purchase industrial articles from abroad. With Suleyman the Great, Turkey standing at the height of its power, financial difficulties already set in. Feudal tenures were converted into waqf and the system of farming revenues was introduced. The first attempt at a budget was made in 1609; another in 1653, and another in 1660. At this time the brilliant administration of the two Koprulus restored temporary order to finance. The form of budget remained the same till 1862, when Fuad Pasha attached a regular budget to his report on the financial situation. The budgets were never accurate; and debased currency and confiscation of property, to which the government resorted, destroyed public confidence.

A more reassuring aspect is presented if we turn our attention to learning and art, to the contribution of the Turks to Islamic culture in the purest sense. The Turks were always great admires of learning and faithful pupils of other nations, even though they lacked originality. Their scholars were erudite in Persian and Arabic culture; and, as learning in the Middle Ages was synonymous with theology, the Islamic theology soon captivated the Muslim Turks. Their first Sultans erected mosques, and at their sides madrasahs, where, in the Arabic style, pupils squatted before the columns and went through the curriculum of learning. Those who needed higher knowledge visited the famous schools of Egypt. The language of instruction being Arabic, as Latin was in Europe, an internationalism within the respective cultures was much

more general than today, when national languages seem to erect stiff barriers. After the first learned Turks like Sheikh Udebali, the father-in-law of Sultan Osman, Dursun Faqih and Chandaralı Kara Halıl, the school of Isnik gained reputation, and this madrasah was founded by Orkhan. After the conquest of Adrianople and Constantinople, wonderful great mosques and madrasahs were erected by the Sultans; that of Adrianople built by Selim, and in Constantinople the great Suleymanıyeh were foremost among the seats of learning. Scholars and students flocked there from abroad. The most famous teachers were Aksarayli Jemaluddin and Sa'afuddin Taftazani whose commentaries are still in use in Muslim schools. Sheykh Bedruddın wrote valuable books on Sufism, and distinguished himself from his contemporaries by his liberal philosophic tendencies. Under the reign of Mohammed the Conqueror Mulla Khusrev distinguished himself by his juridical works, one of which *Ghurar* served as a text for fiqh, the other *Durar* as a commentary on it. During the reign of Selim I, Zembıllı 'Alı Jemali and Kemal Pashazadeh, the great mufti, attracted many learned men to their seats, while the reign of Suleyman can boast of Abu Su'ud Efendı and Ibn Kemal. The later excelled in commentaries and scholasticism, and also wrote history and poetry. His was a universal talent and he was considered the greatest scholar of his age. Abu Su'ud distinguished himself by his knowledge of the *Sheri'at* of which he was the greatest representative in his age. No Turk could write Arabic as he could. These two great scholars were unsurpassed in later times. With the downward trend of Ottoman power spiritual capacity too seems to have weakened, and although scholasticism prevailed in the Turkish madrasahs up to our days, no new thought, no new departure in philosophy can be noticed. Theological and philosophic learning came to a standstill.

Science in Turkey was first represented by medicine. The lexicon of learned men reveals the names of hundreds of physicians who were of Turkish nationality. The first stone-built hospital was erected by Bayezid I (1401) at Brusa, to which a training college was attached. In the madrasah of the Suleymaniyeh and in the Fatih mosque Yunani medicine

was industriously studied. It is noteworthy that, while the medium of theological and philosophical learning was Arabic, books of medicine were written in Turkish. The Turks contributed to the advancement of the medical knowledge of brain diseases and studied the laws of inherited diseases. Among their famous physicians in the time of Bayezid were a certain Ishaq and Haji Pasha who wrote learned treatises; in the reigns of the Conqueror flourished Altinjizadeh, Kahwejizadeh Ahmed, 'Ali Ahmed Chelebi, Vesim 'Abbas and others. Their fame and skill in operations, especially as opthalmologists, reached Central Europe. Besides theology and medicine historiography was a remarkable achievement in Turkish culture. Although as a rule the prose literature cannot compare favourably with the poetical productions of the Turks, the best, and from a scientific point of view the most valuable, of their productions, is their *tarikh* literature. In the beginning it was an imitation of Persian models; later it never quite could get rid of a floridity of style which obscured the meaning. The Sultans encouraged historiography, for it immortalised their glorious deeds, and though most histories were composed with the one-sided view, with the help of textual criticism the tarikhs still yield valuable information.

The first Turkish historian was 'Ashiq Pashazadeh who flourished during the reign of Bayezid II, and like his contemporary Neshri in his *Jihan-numa* used a fluent, and matter-of-fact style in describing the battles of the Ottomans. Idris Bittisi compiled in Persian under the title *Hesht Bihisht*, a historical work in a literary style. The Turkish historians of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries depict the events before the conquest of Constantinople from the point of view of Ottoman imperialism, and are prone to forget that the Turks issued from a village community and could turn their arms against their rivals in Anatolia only after they had attained to world-power by the conquest of Constantinople. From the reign of Suleyman onward the tarikhs became rhymed in form and obscure in meaning. Many of them are panegyrics. The series of official chroniclers (Waqa'navis), begins with Hoja Sa'deddin (*Taj-ut-tawarikh*) who records the events till the time of Selim II in a turgid and coarse style. Na'ima ithes

most reliable source of Turkish history, though his style is also far from impeccable. Rashid Mohamed, Ismail 'Asim, 'Izzi Suleyman, Wasif Ahmed, Mohamed Subhi, Pechewi, Selanikli Mustafa, 'Ali Efendi. Katib Chelebi and Munajjim Bashi all wrote of the changing events of Turkish history. Besides their comprehensive histories, there are a number of valuable monographs on biography, literature and palace-life, like Mustafa Pasha's *Neta'iju'l-wuqu'at*, Ata Bey's Anderun Tarikhi, 'Ali Efendi's *Menaqib-i-Hunerweran*. The Neta'iju'l-*wuqu'at* does not restrict itself to the narrating of events, but depicts the administration and organisation of the Empire. The *Anderun Tarikhi* is a true picture of palace-life written in a surfeited, elaborate style which sometime sinks from literature to a mere jingle of words. The historico-critical work of Kochi Bey gives the most lucid survey of the causes of the decay of the Empire

From this brief summary I cannot omit the Turkish geographers. The extension of the empire necessitated geographical knowledge and from the sixteenth century onwards we find a number of important geographical and nautical works. Besides those mentioned already, there were Sipahizadeh Mohamed and Emir Mohamed ibn Hasan who wrote the first Turkish description of America at the end of the sixteenth century.

The greatest of Turkish geniuses was undoubtedly Katib Chelebi, commonly known as Haji Khalifah, the author of the encyclopedic work *Kashf-uz-Zunun*. He wrote a general geography under the title *Jihan-numa*, and translated from Latin the Atlas Minor, besides compiling books on naval warfare. Ra'if Mahmud compiled an English geography and atlas during the reign of Selim III, (1789-1807).

Turkish literature has borne the imprint of the duality of the nation from the beginning. The ruling and educated classes despised the pure and simple language of the people; and gradually an artificial language came into existence, which was surfeited with Persian and Arabic words to such an extent that it became unintelligible to the people. Literature, for the Ottomans, meant only this stilted, artificial style, following Persian models very closely; the inspiration of the

people found vent in cradle-songs, stories of the *meddah*, and the stage-play *Orta Oynu* which, though influenced by the Byzantine mimes, thoroughly depicted the life and mentality of the common people. The Chinese shadow-play, on its long wanderings across Asia, found easy access in its Islamised form to the liking of the people; and on cool evenings, in fragrant gardens, to the accompaniment of the gurgling of the nargileh and the scent of the famous Turkish coffee, the people eagerly listened to, and enjoyed, the dramatic gestures of the *meddah* and his attractive, sometimes ludicrous stories. The harem-life produces the rhymed quatrains composed by women (*mani*-verses), and read by them on festive occasions in a joking way. Folk songs in old Turkish metres survived on the lips and in the hearts of the people for centuries, and some fraternities like those of the Yesewis and the Bektashis composed their illuminative songs in Turkish.

But, apart from these scanty remnants, the literature of the learned was foreign in sentiments. It slowly accommodated itself to the taste and feelings of the people, as its political importance increased and clamoured for recognition. The first and perhaps the greatest literary productions on Turkish soil were the *mesnewis* of Jelalu'd-din Rumi, composed in Persian; only two stray Turkish lines betray the nationality of the author. His son, Sultan Veled, wrote in Turkish but used the Persian prosody. When the Ottoman Sultanate established itself, 'Ashiq Pasha wrote his *Gharib-nameh* and Suleyman Chelebi his Mevludieh in pure Turkish; but Persian literature soon overwhelmed these vague attempts and at the time of the Conqueror we find already a Persianised Turkish, and the prominence of Persian models. We may broadly say that, whenever a new star arose in Persia, its brilliance was promptly felt in Turkish poetry. The madrasahs with their Arabic teaching also strongly influenced the literary taste of the learned. Turkish literature has become a true depository of ideas from Islamised Iran. A literature of the palace grew up, its themes being Sufic, its poetical expression that of the moth yearning for the light in which it ultimately burns. The diwans with their *qasidahs*, *medhieh munajat* and *ghazals* were the fashionable literary forms. In the time of

Suleyman the Magnificent this literary school produced its first great representative. Fuzuli of Baghdad, who, in spite of his coarse provincial Turkish gave evidence of a first-rate poetic talent in his Diwan and *Leylah ve Mejnun*. He was surpassed, only as far as refinement of language goes, by Baqi who flourished in the seventeenth century, and who was considered the greatest Turkish lyric poet. In originality Fuzuli was superior. Zati with his *Shem u Pervane*, Lami'i, Ruhi, and Yahya Bey with his *Shah u Geda*, belong to Baqi's age. Fashion and taste were thorough imitations of Persian models. This imitative and artificial spirit rose to its highest in the seventeenth century. Nefii and his contemporaries saw the greatest beauty of poetry and prose in style as such, and not in the expression of feelings. In this respect Nergisi went so far that his works are more a play on words than poetry.

In the beginning of the eighteenth century it became impossible to read poetry without ample commentaries, so abstruse had its style become. Nedim, the gayest of lyric poets, writes in a comparatively clear style, Raghib Pasha represents philosophic poetry, Fitnet Hanim the women's sentimentality of that age. The nineteenth century becomes the harbinger of simplicity, and Sheikh Galib (Mohamed Esad)'s *Husn u Ishq*, a rhymed story, and his Diwan are astonishingly free from the turgidity of his predecessors. The Diwan-literature begins to ebb and Sumbulzadeh Vehbi, Sururi, and Kechizadeh Izzet Mulla may be regarded as its last representatives. From the time of the great reformer Sultan Mahmud II, it became generally felt that the mental and physical structure of the Ottoman empire was debilitated. We can notice that the great statesmen of this period, Pertev and Aqif Pashas and later, under 'Abdul Mejid; Rifa'at and Reshid Pashas, felt a nausea at the meaningless adorned style of the official documents, and tried to simplify them. The same tendency is noticeable in literature proper. Another great factor which changed the aspect and taste of literature was the influence of Europe, with which Turkey came into more direct touch from the time of Napoleon. A revival of literature followed, which gave great promise.

As said above, the Turks have a rare imitative and adaptive spirit, by which they can easily imbibe the spirit, the productions of other peoples and utilise them for their purposes. Perhaps in architecture the Turks have set up the noblest monuments of this adaptive spirit. Coming through Persia and Syria, the Seljuk Turks carried the Arabo-Persian ideals of art into Anatolia, where the influence of Byzantium further enriched their materials. The Turkish genius revealed itself not in blindly accumulating these materials and styles, but in the creation from the ingredient materials of a new, typically Turkish, architecture, which unites the beauty and elegance of Arabic, Persian and Greek art.

The first architectural monuments of Turkey are to be found in Iznik and Brusa, which for some time was the capital of the nascent State, and these are mainly public buildings in the Seljuk style, mosques, madrasahs and tombs. The colour of the tiles which were used to cover the walls and the cupolas gave them the name of Green Mosques. The Seljuk style elaborated the carving and the ornaments of the doorway. It must be remembered that the colder climate of Asia Minor did not allow open courtyards to be used as praying-places, but the mosque has become a closed-in hall, and doors came into prominence. The Persian fashion of decorating the walls with coloured tiles of high perfection was followed in the mosque of Brusa and Iznik. The size of the buildings was comparatively small and no pillars supported the roof. The Turks could not cover a large space with one cupola so they resorted to multiplication of the cupolas and thereby minimised the space which each of them had to cover. But the cupolas which were all on the same level did not give the impression of height and soon a development set in which elevated the central cupola above the rest.

With the conquest of Constantinople the Byzantine influence which had only indirectly reached the Turks before, makes itself strongly felt. The great empire provided sufficient wealth to erect splendid public buildings, and the rapidly developing social life necessitated other buildings than mosques and tombs, such as public wells, carvanserays, bazaars and palaces. The Greek church, Aya Sofia, became the model of

the Turkish mosque, such as the mosques of Bayezid, Shehzadeh, Suleymaniyeh, Sultan Ahmed, and Yeni Jami'. These buildings are characterised by an extremely high central cupola surrounded by a number of small ones supported by mighty round columns. The walls are not so thick and heavy as in the Byzantine buildings. The arches were either round or pointed but always wide, the capitals of columns were worked out into stalactites. The entrance to the mosque was surrounded by a colonnade and behind it the *'imaretkhanah* with its small round cupolas served as rooms for students.

Instead of the golden mosaics and sacred pictures of the Byzantine churches, the inner walls of the mosques were covered with Arabic inscriptions and the lofty names of the four Caliphs. An innovation of the utmost gracefulness was introduced by the Turks, and added new beauty to the Byzantine style: the minaret. The shape of the minaret varies in the Arabic and Persian styles, and the Turks simplified it by creating a smooth, slender, very high tower with a simple roof; only carved balconies like flowerwreaths enrich its simplicity.

A palace was built on the site of the Byzantine palace at the point of the protruding peninsula of Stambul, on the most glorious spot in the world. It has had a long history, for every Sultan added numerous buildings to it. The most remarkable parts are the harem, for its wall-tiles and decorations, and the Baghdad-Kyushk, which was erected by Murad IV after the recapture of Baghdad. The architects of these buildings were mostly converted Greeks, like the great and most fertile Sinan, who is supposed to have built more than eighty public monuments.

There is one Jami' in the Muslim world with six high minarets, that of Sultan Ahmed on the historic square of the Roman hippodrome opposite the obelisk of Theodosius and the relic of the battle of Plataia. Its architect was Mohamed Agha, a pupil of Sinan.

The eighteenth century marks a new period in architecture. At this time public fountains and palaces were built in abundance, but great fires and earthquakes have destroyed a number of them. The graceful fountain of Ahmad III, the

fine Nur-i-Osmani mosque, and the Laleli Jami' are glorious monuments. The European rococo style vaguely but unmistakably announces itself on their decorations, and with extreme refinement decadence sets in. The buildings which were erected in the nineteenth century are strongly imitative of European models.

Constantinople, which is situated on the most beautiful spot in the world, soon increased and spread on both banks of the Golden Horn. Houses made of wood with protruding carved balconies looked more like bird-cages than human habitations, but added immensely to the romantic and picturesque aspect of the town. The lattice-windows which concealed the beauties of the harem gave a mysterious air to the quiet and calm streets. Mighty *konaks* (palaces) of the rich contained carpets and other ornaments of immense value, but even the poorest Turk kept his house clean and richly decorated with rugs.

Family life, as in every Muslim country, was separate as to sexes. The Sultans, when their power became paramount, did not marry from noble families but selected their wives from those slavegirls who bore sons to them. This did not become the custom of the nobles, who strictly adhered to the prescribed ceremonies of marriage, though it was the fashion to keep a large number of slaves.

Social life was separated into two parts. Men amused themselves in coffee-houses, listening to poets or story-tellers ; women made excursions on Fridays by boat to the beautiful groves of the fresh waters of Constantinople. Recitations and music and the display of gorgeous dresses of silk and furs made such trips a most enjoyable entertainment.

The economic foundation of social life in Turkey was no doubt the land and its products. The fiefs, subject to the tenants and industriously looked after, secured the food of the people. Besides agriculture, industry, notably those branches of industry which served military purposes and satisfied the wants of oriental life, soon developed, and gave livelihood to the inhabitants of the towns. The artisans were organised in guilds and the different professions derived their origins from certain *pirs*. Evlia Chelebi, the greatest traveller of the Turks

in the seventeenth century, gives a vivid description of a procession of guilds among which many such an occupation figures as would not be permitted today. The bazaars were veritable museums of oriental wares of leather, tin, copper, woven stuff and silk, produced in Turkey or imported by an extensive system of caravans from every part of the world. Fleets of merchantmen belonging to Genoa and Venice exchanged the goods of Asia and Europe. The Turks did not care much for maritime trade and left it to foreigners or to their Christian subjects.

The Turk was a soldier and administrator, a judge and guardian of law and order. His only riches consisted of real estate or the salary he drew for service. The Christian subjects took to the more profitable pursuits of trade and soon enriched themselves to such an extent as to rouse the jealousy of the Muslims, whose sons bled to death on the battlefield in the defence of the State. The Christians were exempt from military service and the heaviest burden was borne by the Muslim Turks. And these Muslim Turks sustained their burden with a heroism, with a sincere obedience to the word of God worthy of admiration. They were the bravest knights of Islam and perpetuated its culture, its taste in art and literature, and its aspect of life, when no other Muslim race was able to withstand the onslaughts of Europe. They with their achievements have shown an example of endurance and will-power which, if rightly understood and followed on the cultural path, must inspire other Muslim peoples with self-consciousness and self-reliance.*

* *Islamic Culture*, The Hyderabad Quarterly Review, January 1934, pp. 1-14.

3

Some Aspects of Modern Arabic Literature

The revival of modern Arabic literature may be said to date from the expedition of Napoleon to Egypt. This genius took with him a number of French scholars to the sleepy East and roused the interest of Muslims in learning. There never was a fundamental difference between Islamic culture and the culture of Western nations, as both have profited by the selfsame sources of Hellenism. In the middle ages Islamic scholars transmitted these sources and their spirit of free investigation to the then backward West, and the progressive West has repaid the loan by giving the results of its study to the Islamic East from the 19th century onward.

Jabarti in his historical work describes the French laboratories of chemistry and physics. He witnessed them with astonishment and admiration at a time when French soldiers were trying to establish political power in Egypt. After the expulsion of the French army from the Egyptian soil, Mohammad 'Ali, the illiterate Albanian soldier-genius, opened the doors of the Arabic East to the scholars of the West. The numerous delegations of Egyptian students to France gave new life to the decaying spiritual body of Egypt. There was an intellectual revival, which led to the creation of masterpieces in Arabic literature.

A new kind of Arabic literature sprang up, in a new style, with new subjects and a new outlook on life, conditioned

by closer connection with the West. Poetry, though still clinging to the form of the qasida and ghazel, became gradually modernised. It abandoned the difficult, ornate flowery diction and tended more and more to express sentiments and aspirations. National consciousness awoke in the hearts of the poets and the memory of the glorious dead induced the poets to make their contribution to personal and national liberty. A new type of prose literature came into existence as a result of the gradual transformation of society caused by industrialism: the short story, the novel and the dramatic pieces. Short story was not a European invention. The original impulse was given to the Italian and French writers of the middle ages by *The Arabian Nights* and the endless tale of the adventures of the heroic Antar ibn Shaddad, but the modern European novel depicted a new social environment and appeared in a more elaborate garb than its ancestral precursors wore. A few decades after the birth of the Turkish novel in the middle of the 19th century, novels in the Arabic language followed and very soon such masterpieces appeared that they deserved to be translated into European languages. It suffices to mention Mahmoud Teymour, Taufiq al-Hakim, Taha Husain, Tahir Lashin, Amin Hasuna, Husain Heykel, Ibrahim Masri Abdul Qadir Mazini, Najib Mahfuz, Abdul Hamid Juda s-Sahhar, 'Abdul Halim 'Abdullah, 'Ali Ahmed Bakathir, Amin Yusuf Ghurab, Mahmud al-Badawi and Najib al 'Aqiqi. A due appreciation of the literary merits of these and many other writers will be found in my book on the history of modern Arabic literature.

In my present treatise I restrict my investigation to a certain cycle of writers who are the precursors of a hopeful future literary evolution resulting from the gradual industrialisation of the Near Eastern societies. I had the opportunity to meet the vanguard of the new progressive Arabic literature in the meetings of the society *Rabitat-al-Adab al-Hadith*. Its prominent members are Mohammad Naji, Saharti, Sayrafi, Wadi Filistin, Ridwan Ibrahim, 'Abdullah 'Abdul-Jabbar, Zakariya'l-Ansari, 'Abdul Mun'im Khafaji, Halim Mitri and others. The spiritual ancestor of the circle is the ingenius Dr. Zaki Abu Shadi, prolific writer on criticism, prose, drama and

poetry. The journal which he started bore the brave title "Apollo", implying his adhesion to the fountains of Hellenism, from which Muslim Arabs of yore also drew inspiration.

One of the writers of the *Rabita* is 'Abdul Mun'im Khafaji, an Azharite Sheikh, who descended from the famous Andalusian family of Khafaji, the story of which he has published in his book *Banu Khafaji wa Tarikhukum as-Siyasi wa'l-Adabi* in nine fascicules. He is a most prolific author, who in his relatively short life of forty years has published nearly as many volumes of history, literature and poetry. It is a characteristic feature of Arab writers to produce a large number of books; but Khafaji's works are not mere compilations. He independently criticises Arabic literature of the past and present. Halim Mitri in his book recently published under the title *Min Ruwad al-Adab al-Mu'asir*, devotes several chapters to an appreciation of Khafaji's extraordinary achievements. According to the author, literature is the mirror of the social structure of society. During the reigns of the Abbassides, the *qasidas* reflected the feudal composition of society. The so-called profligate literature (*Adab al-Khala'at*) in the time of Rashid and Ma'mun was the outcome of the easy life of the suddenly enriched classes and the spread of the system of slavery, which led to the irresponsible lavishness and moral deterioration of the ruling elements.

By the side of the enhanced court-literature, there still continued the popular song, the *Mawalia*, cherished by the illiterate people. Ibn Athir mentions these *Mawalia* as an ear-witness. In Spain social conditions were different. A more democratic trend of life got the upper hand and the common people were not so widely separated from the rich, as was the case in the haughty class-conscious Baghdad. and Andalusian classical literature borrowed much from the popular songs.

Khafaji is an Azharite, but the Azhar-mosque, in spite of its cosmopolitan character, still remained Egyptian in its spirit, and Khafaji too retained the Egyptian imprint in his literary work. He could not resist the dominating influence of Cairo, with its manifold historic traditions, changing Mamluk dynasties, Ottoman rule and modern European-fashioned life. His books reflect the variegated influences of his environment and

studies. I may mention ***Madhahib al-Adab, Ra'id ash-Shi'ir al-Hadith, Qisas min at-Tarikh, Mukhtarat minash-Shi'r al-Hadith*** and other rhetorical and critical works.

In his *Madhahib al-Adab* he argues that modern poetry has to serve the interest of the community, consequently it must be realistic. In weal and woe, modern poetry should reflect the sentiments of the community; the community directs and nourishes poetry towards the beautiful and the truth. The life of a poet cannot be spent in carving flowery words pleasing only to a select few, but poetry must reflect the spirit, the soul, the yearning of the suffering people. As to who were the Egyptian poets who came nearest to his ideal conception, he mentions Fikri, Mazini and 'Aqqad, who under the influence of English literature have started a new kind of Arabic poetry. Shauqi was not able to approach the soul of the people to that extent, as he was the mouthpiece of the court, but the Western influence is nevertheless discernible in his lines too.

In his book *Madhahib an-Naqd* Khafaji declares that ancient Arabic criticism was scholastic *fiqhi* and restricted itself to the evaluation of the text, and analysed its rhetorical and stilistical elements, so far as it stood in relationship with the works of the preceding writers. This kind of criticism dissected the text into lines and sentences and treated them as independent units. This was the procedure of Ibn Salam, Jahiz, Ibn Qutaiba, Mubarrad, Ibn al-Mu'tazz Amedi and Jurjani. Qudama ibn Ja'far considered criticism as the method of analysing the meaning of the words and the appropriate or faulty use of expression. This method still holds good with many of our critics, he says. But this method neglects the mental impressions of the poet and the artistic form the sentimental factors. Consequently, it does not lead to the real comprehension of literature. Besides, personal predilections prevent them from exposing the truth. The realistic school refuses literary expression "l'art pour l'art". Taufiq al-Hakim represents another attitude. According to him, it is not necessary that literature should be serviceable to social or political tendencies; it suffices if it is artistic. The artist should not be bound to serve the taste of the people at large; pure art

should direct his pen or brush.* Ahmed Amin avowed another confession: "art is for life alone".

In recent years under Western influence the prosaic form of poetry has entered into Arabic literature. Khafaji denies the justification of free verse, as it is contrary to the Arabic taste. An interesting debate was roused among Egyptian critics on this question. Mohammad 'Awad, in his article in the review *ar-Risala*, has refused to acknowledge the right of free verse in Arabic poetry, while Zaki Abu Shadi, in his reply, asks to leave the verdict on this issue to the future, as free verse may come out victoriously in dramatic literature.

All these critical controversies clearly show how deeply Egyptian literary life is imbued with the new spirit of the West. Egypt and Lebanon by their geographical situation were sooner prone to feel the Western impact in their economic life and consequently this led to a freer and more unshackled expression in literature.

Egypt can boast of several literary circles which encourage poetry. One of these is the circle of the poet Khalid al-Jarnusi, in which we notice a number of poetesses—a sign of the advance of the emancipation of women. Among them we may mention Jalila Rida, the authoress of *Al-Lahn al-Baki* (The Weeping Song) and Zeyneb Husein. The poets who rally to this circle are 'Abdullah Shamseddin with his diwan *Asda' al-Hurriyat* (Echo of Freedom), Khalil Jirjis Khalil, Ibrahim 'Isa, Rushdi Mahir, and Major Mohammed 'Ali Ahmed. The circle of the Arab Fraternity is headed by the talented poetess Jamila'l 'Alaili, editoress of the magazine al-Ahdaj (The Aims), who has won fame by her qasida entitled *Ila Ibnati* (To my Daughter) and *Min Wahy al-Fajr* (The Inspiration of Sunrise). The Muslim Youths' Association also gathers a number of poets under the leadership of the mystic poet Mahmoud Jabr.

As to the trends of contemporary Egyptian poetry, the most prevalent among them is the yearning after freedom. Political life has become the background of sincere inspiration.

* Nu'man Ashir, '*Hawadith 'Amm Faraj*' criticises this attitude, and Shahada'l-Khuri, in his "*Fusul 'l-Adab wal't-Ijtima*" (Damascus).

Even the great Abu Shadi, versatile in so many fields of literature, and particularly poetry, must be reckoned chiefly as a poet of liberty. So also Khalid Jarnusi in his *Hadatha fi'Asr ar-Rashid*. (It happened in the reign of Rashid), which is rather an epic commemorating the glory of Muslim history, fights against the shackles of tradition, the false idols and ignorance which encumber the free development of the people. Similarly, Khalil Jirjis in his *Thar al-Fida'iyin* (Revenge of the Redeemers) and Mohammad Fauzi'l-Antil in *Aghniyat al-Hurriyat* (Songs of Liberty) represent this direction.

Another aspect of modern Egyptian poetry is the approach to nature. Description of natural phenomena was not alien to old Arabic poetry, but the new conception is totally different. The poet, so to speak, identifies himself with the sounds, the fragrance and colours of bushes, forests, rivers, sunsets and dawns.[1] An example of this aspect is given in Mahmoud Hasan Isma'il's diwan *Ayna'l Mafarr* (Where is the Refuge ?), where he talks of the Nile, the prayers of the grass, and the fading flowers. Saharti speaks in the *Azhar adh-Dhikra* (Flowers of Memory) of the sons of nature, of the butterfly, the rivulet, and the shady tree under which a spring sends forth its bubbling waters. Nature appears in his lines as a sanctuary of creation. 'Ali Shahata in his *Nujum wa Rujum* (Stars and Siderites) depicts the life of the village which has impressed many a modern poet like M. Hasan Isma'il, who stands in admiration before the water-wheel, the bullock, the ripening ears of corn and the thrashing machine in his *Hakadha ughanni* (Thus I sing).

This kind of modern poetry is undoubtedly due to the impact of the West on Egyptian life in general. The Arabic poetry of the Americans has taken mighty strides towards the West and Isma'il Ahmed Adham has gone far as to declare that the poetry of the emigration is Arabic in name only and exhales European spirit (*Kitab az-Zahawi ash-Sha'ir*, p. 15). Abu Shabaka in his book *Rawabit al-Fikr wa-r Ruh* (Mental and Spiritual Ties) asserts that all literary events in France

1. Ibn Rumi may be regarded as the precursor of such an identification.

have found a counterpart in new Arabic literature. But we may discern also other influences besides those coming from France, especially English influence, which may be considered as a dominant factor. Antun Gattas Karam (*Ar-Ramziyat wa'l-Adab al-'Arabi'l-Hadith*, p. 115) acknowledges very rightly the personal predilections which crop up in Arabic verse. We ascribe to such predilections some poetic translations from foreign literatures.

The traditional love of Arabic-speaking peoples for poetry is proved by the great number of poets and critics flourishing in our times. I know of the following critical works dealing with Egyptian poets: Mohammad 'Abdul-Fattah Ibrahim's *Kitab Shu'ara'una'd-Dubbat*; Sa'd Mikha'il's *Samir al-Udaba*, in which he speaks of Shauqi, Muharram, Ahmed Zaki Abu Shadi, Isma'il Sabri, Barakat Mohammad, Hafiz, Hasan Kamil as-Sayrafi, Khalil Mutran, Sahib Jawdat and others; Yusuf Ja'qub Miskuni's *Abqariyat Nisa'al-Qarn at-Tasi, 'Ashara*, in which we find the appreciation of 'Aisha Teymuriya, Wardat al Yaziji, Zeyneb Fawwaz al-'Amiliya; last but not least Saharti's book *Ash-Shi'r al-Mu'asir 'ala Dau'n-Naqd al-Hadith* is worthy of study.

It is impossible to leave unmentioned among the Egyptian poets Dr. Ibrahim Naji, whom I first met in St. George's Hospital, London, where he lay a victim of a motor accident, with a broken leg. Later, I enjoyed his company innumerable times in the little, intimate cafes of Cairo, and after the second world war the news of his premature death came as great shock to me. A fragile physical figure held up a blazing soul, radiating a lofty spirit beaming with delightful lyrics; Naji represents the sunrise of song in Arabic poetry. He expresses his everyday experiences in musical rhymes and rhythms, thrilling the reader and the listener. He conceived poetry as the manifestation of his sentiments, pangs of love and joy of the universe:

"Poetry is a magic lute,
Which chants the story of peoples.
Hopes crowd and vibrate on its string,
It is a flute resounding
Sorrow and secret whispering.

It is the hymn of life
And the profusion of song.
It is the sigh of the poet,
Who knows of love and woe."

In the preface of his Diwan *layale, l-Qahira* (Cairene Nights) he says as follows: "Poetry to me is like a window from which I look down on life, through which I behold eternity and what comes after it. It is the air I breathe, the balsam with which I heal the wounds of my soul, when sadness overpowers it."

It is the musical character of Naji's lyrics that has influenced many contemporaries, like the Hijazi poet Ahmed 'Abdul Ghafur Attar in his Diwan: *Al-Hawa wa'sh-Shabab.*

A few quotations may be given here as specimens:

"Oh, she who slumbered while the sun in her house
Glittered on the horizon with a shining blaze,
A tired youth knocked at the door.
He has come a long way and his steps faltered.
He let down the saddle of his hopes in your abode,
And in the sanctuary of your love laid down his stick."

We feel that Naji is depicting poetical scenes rising before our mental eyes. His words not only convey the meaning but present a charming picture convincing in its truthfulness. In his poem *Rasail Tahtariqu* (Burnt Leaves) he says:

"Affection faded and embaled itself,
Delivered from all its pain.
But I face the deadly fate
And drain the rest of its silver cup,
Though it returned with throng and crowd
In a dark night, keeping me awake
With its tormenting shade,
Her loving letters reposed still,
Like a babe in its dreams,
They kindled in them the blaze
Fondling their dear deceptions

And subverted the tale of our love
From the beginning to the end.
I burnt them and threw my heart
Into the very midst of lambant flames."

He continues talking to his heart:

"Don't tell me that in the morn we meet.
For the promised morn is as far as the stars,
Did you say: to morrow ? so teach me patience,
Though I wished my life would dwindle away,
The thrill of joy permeated me
And we danced, I, and the heart intoxicated,
Then we parted, I, and the heart at eve
Weaving our hopes and secrets together
We rode on fancy towards its abode
And embaled the fate and all the world.
Thus spoke the heart to me: is it true what we have got ?
How the wakeful fate connived at us.
And I replied: don't worry, many a home
Was dear and rose above all expectations.
Oh thou light, be greeted with humility
Oh thou sanctuary, silent and full of adoration,
Many a word which I had prepared
For you, when I met you, disdained to obey
And the imprisoned reproof in my mouth
Revolted me and burst into tears."

In his most typical verses he still remains pictorial:

"Sometimes the heritage sleeps through ages,
Slumbering in the deaf wayless deserts,
And the noble spirit too dozes in glory
To appear in a brown countenance.
You may see her approaching Egypt
With the force, firmness, sagacity and blade.
I swear, majesty dozed to awake
Anew in your brilliant face."

Ibrahim Naji was the poet of picture and imagination. His imagination has not manifested itself in metaphors, similes and *allusions*, but he strove to create the incarnation of experienced life.

Mohammad al-Asmar, the Egyptian, is the poet of simple verse. Although an Azharite, he threw off all the shackles of pedantry. In his prolific words there is an immense treasure. A number of prominent authors hailed his poetry with enthusiasm: Mahmoud Ghanim, 'Ali Jundi, 'Abdul Ghany Hasan, Fuad Shakir, the Hijazi poet Khalil Mutran. 'Adil al-Ghadban eulogises his merits in poetry and prose. His conviction was that poetry must spring from the enthusiasm of the soul and rendered in the simplest form of words. Not the technique but the spirit is what makes art. His innumerable lines bear testimony to his conviction. For example:

"A poet in all his days empty handed
Drowned in debts for ever ;
But in all this plight he never sank
Into the abyss, but hovered above the polar stars,
Laughing, inflated with haughty pride
Of brilliant power and rich of prey.
He who saw him, asked: what is his wealth ?
It is the zero on the left side of numbers,
Spending in his day what he possessed,
Leaving to God the care of the morrow !"

We may say a few words about dramatic poetry. Dramatic literature is a novelty in the Arabic language, and its firstlings represented the national sentiment and the glory of the ancestors. As to the difficulty and even the possibility of rhymed speech on the stage, opinions widely differed. Dr. Taha Husein in his preface to 'Aziz Abaza's poetic drama *Ghurub al-Andalus* (Sunset of Spain) declares that poetic drama has not outgrown its infancy ; it tyrannises its metre and rhymes and prose is preferable on the stage. 'Aziz Abaza, on the contrary, opined that the public did not find poetic drama to be wearisome, as many a piece of this kind has gained great success on the Western stages. It was Ahmed Shouqi

who first introduced poetic drama into Arabic literature, following the models of European writers without blindly imitating them. He was a genius. Deeply imbued with the traditions of Arabic poetry, he composed his dramatic verses with a fidelity to those noble traditions. It was believed for a time that the flexibility of the Arabic language would render it suitable to that kind of literature, but this held true only as far the genius of Shouqi was concerned. After his successes poetic drama began to fade and the dramatic authors returned to prose, either in *fusha,* or in 'amiya.

Dr. Taha Husein expounded his views in opposition to 'Aziz Abaza in his article *At-Tamthil bayna' sh-Shi'r wa'n Nathr* (Jumhuriyat 1954, IV. 10), saying that dramatic literature sprang up after the First World War, and that this momentous event had changed Shouqi from the poet of the court into the champion of the people and compelled him to use this new form of literary expression. The new outlook made him conscious of himself and of his nationality and he tried to emulate the great dramatic authors of the West—Corneille, Racine and Victor Hugo.

It must, however, be remembered that Shouqi was a poet first and a dramatic author afterwards. Consequently, he was a beginner in this kind of art. His plays sound too much lyrical and, in fact, some of his dialogues have been sung by singers of those days, like Abdul Wahhab and Munira'l-Mahdiya shouting out: "Ana Antonio, Antonio ana !"

Iraq, being farther off from the world's economic axis, has retained to a greater extent the older and more rigid traditions. From among the numerous Iraqi poets whom Rafa'il Butiyu represents as the leading spirits of Iraq in his book *Al-Adab Al-'Asri* (1923), a solitary figure stands out in glaring light, Jamil Sidqi az-Zahawi. From the face of Zahawi the characteristic well-meaning, enthusiastic poet-philosopher of the Muslim East radiates down to the onlookers. His long dishevelled hair, disorderly beard and languid eyes betray the wearied atmosphere of the Orient, in which from time to time a flash of courage spreads its flame to extinguish the merciless materialism of the West and dive into fanciful dreaming again. To me, personally, who tried to understand and to

pardon everything, this type has never been alien, as it represents the heroic strugglers of the middle ages towards cognition, and though they mixed in their speculations empirical methods with imaginative day-dreams, they were still the forerunners of the 19th century.

Zahawi was a man of weak constitution ; he could hardly move his legs and he used to ride on a white donkey to the cafes of Baghdad, where he spent his leisure in playing *tawla*, smoking cigarettes and the *nargile*, and entertaining his friends with anecdotes and poems. He wrote many a scientific treatise, in which he imputed the birth of the universe and its working to the repercussions of electrones subsiding in matter, instead of the law of gravitation. Apart from these scientific speculations, he composed innumerable poems on diverse subjects. The game of *tawla* also found an adequate exponent in his genius. Halim Mitri in his above-mentioned book represents him as the rejuvenator of Arabic poetry, and when the sober and cool thinker sometimes absorbs the sentimental tones, imagination is by no means deficient in his lines. The subjects of his poems are not only thought, but also deed, and the mutual counter-effect of truth and events. The poetry of Zahawi is akin to that of Wordsworth and Paul Valery, as the problems of life roused his interest and led his pen to expression. His poem on evolution (*At-Tatawwur*) starts with the following lines:

"The ape long ages in the forest passed
Before he found the ascending way at last,
The ape begot, a million years ago,
Man, who set forth upon his progress slow.
What sudden change upon the ape has come ?
His offspring leaves his tribe and forest home.
Weak would he be without intelligence,
And dull his life, like words that make no sense.
When for long years on four legs he had crept,
He stood upright, on two legs proudly stepped.
He took the stone and carved it ; weapons made
For his defence against the beasts that preyed.
But his best weapon is intelligence.

The sense that outstrips every other sense.
Oh, what a mighty change from ape to man,
Whose imagination can the whole world span."

This is pure rationalism, not alien to the noblest thinkers of the *I'tizal* and the *Ikhwan as-Safa.*

He continues thus and winds up the long qasida with the following lines:

"My whole belief is, that all life on earth
From chemical reactions came to birth,
And this phenomenon can nothing be
But the effect of electricity.
Before the land or sea were formed, this force
Became of all terrestrial life the source ;
And countless ages did the change effect
Of beast to man, who stood, and walked erect ;
Heredity does by fixed law decree
That as the fathers were, their sons shall be."

His rationalism was derived from Oriental sources and his own intuition. Sometimes scepticism overpowers him and he exclaims:

"Amazement at life's secrets hindered me
From ever grasping life's felicity ;
And has decreed that here, as in a maze
Of doubts and fantasies, I must prolong my days."

Khafaji discovers the influence of Abu'l-Ala al-Ma'arri in the lines which he invokes him:

"This, above all, my admiration earned—
That you revolted, and tradition spurned ;
Atheist, unbeliever—so they said
You were, and heaped abuse upon your head.
Although your bones have long ago decayed,
In my own house I am your pupil made ;
And unjust calumny which fell on you
And none refuted, falls on my life too."

It is but natural that Zahawi should have had to suffer severe attacks from the Wahhabis of Baghdad. He answered his enemies in his book *Kitab al-Fajr as Sadiq* (The Book of the True Dawn) in 1905.

His scientific speculations expressed in poetry are not irreligious, but only exponents of a freer recognition of the divine essence as manifested by the law of evolution. The thoughts of Herbert Spencer have caught the fancy of the European and also of the Oriental thinkers.

Zahawi composed also lyrical poems, which prove the depth of his sentiments. He addressed the following poem to an imaginary beloved being:

"All night alone in that house I remained,
And unto your imagined face complained ;
It smiled as you do. that deceiving mask—
But what befell me then, oh do not ask ;
I do not cease to cherish and caress
A passion worthy of your loveliness ;
I'd sell my whole life for an hour, if I
Could spend that one hour in your company.
Such love for you, oh Leyla, I endure
That I shall die—in truth, I feel this sure.
Shall I one day when I am dead, appear
An image that your memory holds dear ?"

The feelings of Zahawi are so spontaneous and sincere that his style becomes that of the popular songs.

Shauqi Daif in his *Dirasat fi'shthi'r al-Mu'asir* criticises Zahawi and blames him that his poetry is too scientific and his science too poetic. He cannot really mourn, and cannot really enjoy the beauties of life.

Khafaji refuted this assertion and declared that Zahawi was a poet of tender sentiments, who walked in the footsteps of al-Ma'arri without being pessimistic. He was the child of the optimistic 19th century, in which people believed in the omnipotence of reason and rationalism. His admiration towards al-Ma'arri is shown also in his epic poem, a *mu'arada* to the *Risalat al-Ghufran*, entitled *Thaurat fi'l-Fahim* (Revolu-

›n in the Hell). His patriotic feelings are expressed in his ›em *Inna fi'l ar-Rijal ghair al-Kalam* (The task of men is rily not the talk), an admonition which many a politician uld take to heart.

From the banks of the Tigris, let us now wander away other regions, not so fertile in historic traditions, but ›king forward to a prosperous future. Sudan has only cently emerged from obscurity and it was the political ·uggle which called attention to this torrid country. A poet note, who died at an early age, commemorated his patriotic elings towards Egypt. At-Tijani Bashir's poems have not t appeared in book form ; they are scattered in periodicals ıd daily papers. It is to be hoped that the new rising generation will soon publish them and make this talented poet ore generally known. He believed in the natural connexion tween Sudan and Egypt and said:

"Are we not comrades, whom the weight of thought
Has with strong bonds in love together brought ?
Egypt has flourished, and full culture won:
The moon has shone above her, and the sun.
Can we two strong ideas relinquish now ?
Ideas that give each other help—oh, how
Pray tell us, could the Nile its usual bed
Leave, and flow in another course instead ?
When they deny what Egypt teaches, then
I feel myself all hers, with thought and pen."

His love for the Nile inspired him to write the following nes:

"To one whose inspiration fled to you,
And on your breast made beauty breathe anew,
Be gentle, Nile, let hopes and dreams not fade
Nor his fresh youth, here crowned by tender shade."

His patriotic feelings are expressed in the poem which · composed on the occasion of the return of Sayyid Isma'il -Azhari from his pilgrimage under the title of *Wahy al-*

Mahamad. He shows mastery of description in his *Khartum, Madinat as-Shi'r wa'l-Jamal* and *Tuti fi's-Sabah* (Tuti is an island opposite Khartum) and *Aghwar al Qalb* (The Depth of Heart), in which he depicts the beauty of spring in Sudan. Space forbids us to expatiate longer on the merit of this little known Sudanese poet, and in our brief survey we must hurry on to other remote fields.

It is the daughter of my much lamented friend Zaki Abu Shadi who has drawn my attention, and I must need devote some lines to her extraordinary merits. A physician by profession and bacteriologist of fame, Abu Shadi with his English born wife created a world of his own in their Cairene home. He translated plays of Shakespeare and imbibed the freshness and liberty of English poetry. His bold endeavours to transform rigid Arabic poetry into a cigorous, lively and truthful literature was met with keen opposition. He extended his activity to social welfare, fought for agrarian reform, protested against the abuse of titles and deprecated corruption. He was rudely persecuted, and after the death of his wife there was nothing to retain him in his native Egypt and he emigrated to the States, where he found his eternal rest. His works are extant and will continue to rouse the controversy which they created during his life.[2]

His daughter Safiya, under her father's influence and in the new environment of America, has developed into a representative of free verse. Her diwan was published in Cairo in 1954 and manifests a broad power of imagination and free spirit. Her qasidas reflect the mutual effect of East and West. All her poems are really rhymed prose. This form of poetic expression has already been used by Jabran and Mia Ziyada.[3] Its ground work is thought pure and simple, sentiment and fancy in a fortuitous combination, a kind of rational music without the shackles of rhyme and prosody.

Arab critics are not unanimous in their evaluation of this form of poetry. To some poetry is the beautiful, artistic

2. I.A. Edham has written a critical study of his works (Leipzing, 1936).
3. See Mansur Fahmi, *Muhadarat'an Mia Ziyade*, Cairo, 1955.

word, which rises on the wings of fancy and creates the depth of feeling and thought in our senses. They quote the words of Hassan ibn Thabit, the Prophet's favourite poet, who, when he heard how his won had described the sting of a bee in prose, exclaimed: "Verily, this poetry !" Further. they quote Bashshar ibn Burd's speech on the importance of counsel, and those listened to it shouted: "Verily, your prose is more poetic than your verses."

Other Arab critics are of a different opinion. They consider poetry the wordings bound together by strict rules of prosody and rhetoric, as it is very easy to rhyme in Arabic, and if rhyming is let loose without restrictions, it deteriorates into empty verbiage.

The poems of Safiya, even in their unrestricted form, manifest deep feeling. Her poem *Ya's* (Despair) runs like this:

> "I spent my days in a delirium amid the desert of darkness. The roads ran into one another, and every where thorny bushes stared at me, and if you imagined that hope stands before you, and shows the way, you found it was a dire mirage, which cheated you...."

She described her struggle with life in her qasida *Az-Zauraq as-Saghir* (The Small Boat) and in *Wasal al-Muhit* (In the Midst of the Ocean). Her deep sentiments shout out to us in *Fi' Aynaika'd-Dam'u* (Tears in Your Eye). Her diwan is not deficient in humorous pieces, especially in the line in which she describes the troubles of the household. Even symbolic verses crop up on the pages, in which she deals with serious problems of the life on the wings of imagination. It seems that Safiya is one of the most promising representatives of modern Arabic poetry.

Let us now return from the overseas to sunny Egypt, which for a century has been the leading country in the renaissance of Arabic culture. An interesting figure towers up amid the crowd of modern writers. Muhammad 'Abdul Ghany Hasan has written a scholarly work on Ibn Rumi, but he himself is a poet of rare endowments. His poems which he has written between the years of 1928 and 1954, were re-

cently published in book form under the title of *Madi min al'-Umr* (The Past of Life). The diwan is introduced by a poem, the first lines of which are a battle cry and Khafaji compares them with some of Buhturi or Sharif al-Murteda's couplets:

"Say, who keeps silence ? Hold your peace no more !
And who shrinks back? Now boldly go before !
All your affairs, none asking your consent,
Are settled for you—can you be content ?
You hear the arrows speak above your heads.
Around you, all the noise of battle spreads.
The hands of robbers, greedy for their prey,
Reached you, and took the hoped—for spoils away;
Freebooters, since Muhammed 'Ali, rose
And found their booty anywhere they chose."

It is clear that our friend Ghany Hasan is a revolutionary, discontented with the slow progress of present-day Egyptian society. He bravely clamours for more freedom:

"Fighters for freedom ! in your steps resound
The notes of an eternal, mighty sound;
The sound of every warrior for the right
Amidst death's pangs, of all who bravely fight;
It is the sound of free men marching on
Towards the great goal, with their hearts as one;
The sound of all who struggle to break free
From the old yoke of outworn slavery."

Ghany Hasan has recently published a volume containing the works of some Arabic poets of the emigration. 'Aziz Abaza has written a preface to the volume in which he boldly declares that the poets of emigration have not created anything new, as none of them has produced dramatic pieces. I find this remark partly unjust, as Abaza disregards the fact that those writers live in an environment entirely strange to them and they could hardly get accustomed to the new form of life. From their poetry a longing for the lost home rings out, and they still adhere in sentiment to the paternal land.

As to dramatic pieces, Zaki Abu Shadi has written several dramas in America in poetical form, like *Ibn Zeydum*, *Imrul Qais*, and *Kleopatra*—all historic pieces. The last one, a grandiose play, has not yet been published. His *Min Nafidhat-Tarikh* (From the Window of History) appeared in the *Muktataf* (1952), but the third part thereof remained in manuscript, and is at present in the possession of Mr. Wadi Filistin. Abu Shadi gives in this monumental work a dramatised history of mankind; the influence of the "Tragedy of Man" by the Hungarian Imre Madach is unmistakable in it.

Ghany Hasan's selection of the poets of emigration contains the following names: Iliya Abu Madi, Jabran, Ilyas Farhat, Mika'il Na'ima, Shukrullah, Shafiq al-Ma'luf, Rashid Eyyub, Ilyas Qunsul, Fauzi' al-Ma'luf and others. Some of the Arabic American poets wrote symbolic verses. Among these may be mentioned Abu Shadi, Nasib 'Arida, Rashid Eyyub, Abdul Masih Haddad, Iliya Abu'l Madi, all belonging to the circle of "Rabita" in New York, Mishel Ma'luf, and Rashid al-Khuri, who writes under the pen-name "Ash-Sha'ir al-Qarawi" in South America and who established a literary circle in 1925, called "Usbat-al-Andalusi".

A few words remain to be said about the Arabic literature of Hijaz and Kuweit. A few years ago there was hardly any production in these countries worthy of the name of literature. My article in the "Islamic Review" (London) 1954, on the Hijazi literature (in Arabic translation in the "Manhal", Mecca) is but a meagre enumeration of some poetical works, mostly writers by professional officials or schoolmen. Since that time the international traffic has also embraced Arabia into its circle and the long-closed gates of free spiritual expression have been widely opened. New writers have sprung up, who bravely face modern social problems and try to ameliorate the condition of their backward nation with the encouragement of their pen. Among these 'Abdullah Abdu'l-Jabbar, Ibrahim Hashim al-Filali, Sa'id al-'Amudi and Muhammad Hasan 'Awwad deserve mention.

'Abdullah 'Abdu'l-Jabbar has written novels and dramatic pieces. He belongs to the modern school of literature, as is evident from his dramas *Ummi* (My Mother) and *Al-'Amm*

Sahtul. He wrote an epilogue to Ibrahim Hashim al-Filali's book of criticism *Al-Mirsad* (The Observer). His most interesting one-act drama *Ash-Shayatin al-Khurs* (The Dumb Devils) is a realistic work with an instructive aim. Each of his figures is an individual type. It plays in a luxurious hall, in which conflicting thoughts carry on a fierce strife. Some represent conservative, some progressive ideas. One figure is a kind of *bourgeois* and talks in rhymed prose (*saj'*), the other listens and replies only by the nodding of the head. This is the whole plot of the piece, but it expresses the conflicting view of today's society.

Muhammad Hasan 'Awwad published his diwan in 1954 under the title of *Al-Bara'im* Buds. Abu Shadi saw in 'Awwad a romantic innovator with a great future prospect. One of his poems is entitled *Mata* (When) and runs as follows:

"When shall we to immortal glory rise,
And write on legend's page our helpful pride ?
When shall our high race reach full majesty ?
Our well-directed arrows shoot on high?
Oh, can presumptuous error at the peak arrive,
Or for our nation's fame, while sleeping, strive?
Glory is not that which we may possess
Unstriven for, resting in our happiness."

The Arab desert also dreams of attaining that human happiness which the so-called civilisation has given to the people of the West ! 'Awwad's new diwan bears a title, which exposes his programme, viz., *Nahnu Kiyan Jadid.* We are a New Generation.

Sa'id al 'Amudi is the editor of the Majallat al-Hajj and he published his later works in the book *Min Tarikhina* (1954) and his diwan *Dhikra* (Remembrance).

Even little Kuweit has stepped on the stage. We know the names of Shauqi al-Ayyubi and Ahmed Zayn as-Saqqaf. From Oman we have received the diwan of the Emir Saqral-Qasimi, from which we may quote some lines on "A Kiss" (*Qubla*):

"Though she was angry, I kissed her, to impart
The pain that cast its shadow on my heart.
What flamed in me was on her face revealed;
Her cheeks betrayed that which my soul concealed;
She fled, but both of us felt fire arise
Within our breasts, and tears engulfed our eyes."

Is it a reminiscence of Ibn Sahl al-Andalusi's (d. 1251) little poem on a kiss? I do not know, but anyhow it is a courageous start and revival of the ancient glory of Arabian poetry.

I may appropriately close my brief and desultory survey on 'Some Aspects of Modern Arabic Literature' with the mention of Shaik Ibrahim ad-Dabbagh, the Palestinian writer who died in 1945. His posthumous works were published in 1954 under the title of *Fi Zalal al-Hurriyat* (In the Shade of Liberty). The book contains historical, political and social studies which the author has sent to his cousin in the form of letters. The book was introduced by the preface of 'Adil al-Ghadban, in which he calls the author *Sha'ir al-Insaniya* (Poet of Humanity). The book closes with an epilogue written by Mahmoud Teymour under the title *Majlis ad-Dabbagh*.

Dabbagh was a revolutionary poet who yearned for liberty, which his unfortunate home has lost.

"Thou who would'st know my soul's love and desire
From life, which stifles it with anguish dire,
My love is this: to free earth's peoples from
Mob rule, and leaders of officialdom.
Hope in his labour spurs on every soul;
None without liberty can reach his goal."

Dabbagh composed many *qasidas* in which he depicts the dire fate of Palestine: *Filistin al Fariha* (The Wounded Palestine), *Watani l-Awwal* (My First Home), *A'lam ash-Shard* (Stones of the East), *A'lam al-Wadi* (Stones of the Valley), *Dam ash-Shahid* (The Blood of Martyr) and others.

Dabbagh was originally a student of Azhar, but he

developed independently and imbibed the mysticism of patriotism. His writings *Hadith as-Sauma'a* (Talks in a Cloister), *Tarikh al-Hurriyat fi'l-Alam*, *Naqd Shu'ara* l-'Asr (History of Liberty in the World, Criticism of the Poets of our Century) are being collected and published by his friends.

On the whole, modern Arabic literature has entered upon the path of progress and boldly marches on to compete successfully with the literary products of the world. The fruits already ripening promise a rich harvest.*

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4

Islamic Studies

Among the historic phenomena which have not only deeply influenced but decidedly changed the flow of events in the world, the appearance and spread of Islam takes a most prominent part.

The attention of the philosopher may become engaged by phenomena which in their stagnant aspect exhibit a structure or significance of rare beauty or intellectual value, but the historian is attracted by the dynamic movement of the course of events, by the evolution which transforms seemingly insignificant beginnings into mighty consequences. The philologist regards phenomena as they appear under constant conditions and applies his canons of criticism according to standardized rules; the historian views phenomena in motion and attempts to evaluate their evolutionary significance. The philologist's interest and criticisms are circumscribed by rules having a kind of absolute validity, the historian's view is preeminently relative, for his interest is not solely in what things are in their philosophic or aesthetic nature, abstracted from developmental causes, but in those conditions which proved effective in transforming a given complex of things into a different one. The historian is therefore unable to apply fixed rules of abstract ethics, and he must not be influenced by the prevalent standards of values of his own time or civilization. His duty is to point out the

origins and the causes, and the circumstances which have determined the actual course of events. He must *state the facts* and explain as Rank put it "how it happened". The historical method must therefore exclude all kinds of bias, philosophical, theological or ethical. It will use the accumulated knowledge of all branches of learning for the purpose of displaying the mighty movement of human civilization towards an as yet unknown goal, advancing, stumbling, retreating and advancing again. The historian has no need of controverting in a partisan spirit the conclusions reached by the theologians and the philosophers, or challenging the activities of the politicians and the patriots. To him all aspirations and motives serve as the raw material of which history is made and as forces which mould the events in their evolution. It is not his business to pass ethical judgments on the conduct of peoples, or demolish the logical contradictions inherent in the tenets of the religion of any sect; he must study all these as—facts, as the outcome of human nature under actual conditions and circumstances of *being*. He will use his comparative method to observe that similar physical conditions may lead to similar social phenomena, and also that the factors of history, in their rich manifoldness may effect greater or lesser changes according to the peculiar circumstances of time, geographical surroundings, racial nature, and human or accidental occurrences.

From this historical point of view the preaching of Mohamed and the consequent spread of Islam is one of the mightiest factors in the history of humanity. It furnishes a brilliant illustration of historic evolution, how a small germ grows into a forest of living culture changing the entire society and civilization of the surrounding territories.

Arabia had been a country of mystery from time immemorial; every great conqueror had his eye on Arabia for an expedition to its fruitful plateaus or its goblin-haunted deserts. For a long time this vast territory, which sheltered a scanty, tribal population always engaged in bloody internecine feuds, had however no positive contribution to make to the history of culture. Its superfluous population moved northwards and colonised ancient Babylon, whereunder different physical conditions a different type of culture developed and flourished.

The culture of Western Asia almost certainly had its beginnings in Semitic sources, and traces of cultural affinity with Arabia persisted for a long time, but its general trend was altogether different, and in its progress deviated completely from the limited desert life of Arabia.

It was undoubtedly the prophecy of Mohamed, which gave the first impetus to the Arabs and initiated the development of their culture. The history of Mohamed is a striking example of the thesis which maintains that the life of great men supplies the real motive power of cultural evolution. We, being far from the onesidedness of this view, simply point out that without the revelations of Mohamed, the evolution of Arabian civilization would certainly have been retarded till an unfathomable future. The history of Mohamed clearly shows us how a great personality forms an integral part of the existing social conditions, and how the same great personality would have played an entirely different part in another geographical and social environment. It shows how history grows, moulded by its own course and by the evolutionary effects of time, and how historic layers coagulate into new and newer strata. Mohamed's life and the later history of Islam is a splendid example of historic syncretism, which fortunately can be traced from trustworthy sources not available in the history of other religious movements.

Mohamed's activities in the beginning were directed against idolatry, the Kaba and its plurality of gods. His motto: *la ilaha illa'llaha* must correctly by translated as: "there are no gods, but the One Real God". Since then monotheism has remained the ever unchanging fundamental principle of Islam, but when Mohamed emigrated to Medina and his social environment altered, his attitude towards the Koraishites also underwent a change. He added to his activities as a preacher those of a champion of a new faith who wished to conquer his native town and to humble his haughty opponents. He realized the attractive force of the Kaba. He found that the oldest edifice on earth was exercising too great an influence on the Arab mind, and he, a shrewd observer of historic forces, succeeded in finding new channels of expression for the allegiance of his followers to the sacred black stone. He

incorporated into his religion the pagan rites of *tawaf* and *hadj* but in conformity with his monotheistic ideas. Syncretism of rituals and customs by dint of political or social necessity has characterized Islamic history from its very beginnings. Mohamed made a selection of all the elements he found suitable in Christianity and Mosaism, especially in those forms of these religions which were found in Arabia, and passed them through the filter of his own personality.

The conquests of Islam put it into a situation for which it was unprepared. Prayer resulted in a discipline, unknown to the pagan Arabs, and the tribes who used to squander their energy against one another now directed their massed offensive against their neighbouring states and overpowered them without difficulty. Territories rich in corn and in treasures of culture fell an easy prey to the Arabs of the desert. But the Koran soon proved insufficient for the administration of a great empire. Here historic events were the forces which worked for the further syncretism of Islam with local factors. Greeks and Persians were employed as administrators, and Roman law supplied the first impulse to a scientific rendering of *Sheriat*.

Islam conquered vast territories and peoples, but in its victorious march it did not disdain the much nobler conquest of culture, amalgamating all mental treasures which it found suitable and which it incorporated without hesitation into its own and social political structure. Necessity and also self-control dictated by the Koran prevented forcible conversions on a large scale; the constant allegation flung at Islam in this connexion is contrary to historical facts. The appropriation of land and a wholesale conversion of the defeated peoples would have been a financial catastrophe to the Islamic State and Omar's foresight and toleration averted this great evil.

The conquests brought new ideas and new sources of mental development, but they also led to partisan strifes arising from family jealousies. The separation between the *sunnis* and the followers of Ali (*shias*) was due to human factors, alive in every breast, which were fomented into a political strife by an accidental factor as well. The idea of proximity of the ruler to the Godhead, so dear to the Persian mind, started to play an important role at this stage and never subsided altogether

in the future course of events. Persia contributed most of the writers and thinkers of Islam, and they brought with them their own peculiar attitude of mind which continually cropped up in successive ages in renewed forms through fresh layers of culture.

The rule of the Omayyads was characteristically Arab, and the ideals of state and society were more akin to those of the Bedouins than to the pious scholars of Medina. But the progress of the culture started by Mohamed was not checked ; the interest for pagan ideals was spiritualised and made a vehicle for further cultural evolution. The pre-Mohamedan poetry which had lived up to then in the "breasts of men" only, was collected, sifted, carefully arranged and written down. This gave rise to philological researches and elevated the Arabic language to that paramount position from which it has influenced every other Mohamedan language with its inexhaustible vocabulary. The haughtiness and self-admiration of the Arab race which rang out from the literary products of this period and revealed itself in their forms of government, soon found its reaction in the self-consciousness of the Persians, who could boast of an old and high culture, and who were the real spiritual leaders of Islam, and the conflict found expression in a literary form in the *shu'unibite* movement. The political victory of the alien races who based their claims on piety as against descent was secured after a strenuous period of agitation by the battle of Zab.

The political power of the Abbassides was firmly established by the Persians and other races who avowed the universality of Islam. The spirit of toleration and freedom led to a cultural advance unparalleled in the history of Islam. The work of translation was vigourously taken in hand, and all the treasures of the ancient world were rendered into Arabic, which by this very activity attained a flexibility second to no other classical language. Up till then Islam had remained a conquering power which enriched itself from the material and spiritual treasures of other peoples. Henceforward it became a great channel for the transmission of knowledge and the advancement of learning. It preserved the culture of the Greeks, it gathered and absorbed the folklore and literature of India and the science of China, and transmitted all these

treasures to the West which slowly absorbed during succeeding centuries the illumination which had already been kindled in the East. The "Arabic" numerals, and hundreds of Arabic words enriching the vocabularies of European languages indicate the superior culture of Islam in algebra, medicine, chemistry, astronomy, physics, and military arts. In its period of growth the culture of Islam remained eclectic, its course was guided by its liberal spirit which accepted knowledge from every source, and which gladly profited by all suitable influences.

Although the Arab race lost its lead in the Mohamedan world, the Arabic language, the chosen language of the Koran, never ceased to exert its magic influence on Islamic history. Arabic has remained the universal language of learning in every part of the Islamic world, and while Persian with its beauty and elegance has continued to be the medium of wonderful poetic productions, it had to yield to an immense influx of Arabic roots.

The Turks of Central Asia, Ghaznevides, Seldjuks and others, who are known to history by the names of their leaders, adopted the Muslim creed and the Persian-Arabic form of Mohamedan culture. The ambition of the Turk is centred round an imperialistic institution with an autocratic soldier at its head who knows how to command and enforce obedience. As to mental culture they showed a deep humility to their spiritual masters, while they tolerated no political power to contradict them. It was this attitude of the Turks that brought about a succession of unparalleled and limitless empires governed by a comparatively small number of sturdy, manly Turks, in which a flourishing non-Turkish muslim culture was imposed on many millions. Merciless on the battle-field and yet humble in the abode of the learned, was the character of the Turks, Ghaznevide, Seldjuk, or Ottoman alike. Firdousi dedicated his Shahname, in which he eulogised the glorious deeds of the Iranians achieved against their Turanian foes, to Mahmud, son of Sebuktegin, the Turk, who proudly accepted the dedication. The Seldjuk sultans of Konia decorated the walls of their palaces with the inscriptions of the Shahname, so unpretentious were the Turks in the sphere of literature. They encouraged

with their patronage the creation of a literature in which hardly any vestige of their own language remained, for all the works were penned in the Persian language. The Byzantine chronicles in fact describe them as "Persians", as their literary language was Persian.

Their successors, the Ottoman Turks, also adopted Islam and added to it, again through the richly variegated Persian form, the manifold influences of the Byzantines, in dress, architecture and social customs. The work of synretic growth invariably characterized the spread of Islam in every direction.

The invaders of Hindustan were Turks, with all the characteristic features of their race. The culture which they had originally brought to the country was Persian, but in conformity with their own nature they soon imbibed the spirit of India and transformed it into an altogether new and magnificent form.

It will be seen from the above that Islam does not in any way imply a uniform culture which shut out all foreign influences. On the contrary it resembles a magnificent river, fed by innumerable tributaries, which fertilizes the land through which it passes and conveys the cereals and the rich merchandize from one country to another along the shores washed by it. Geographical and historic influences have removed it from the environment from which it sprang, and have broadened it in many directions. But throughout the clash of all these forces the human will did not cease to act and maintain its essential equilibrium preventing the overflow into undesirable channels. Let us not forget the human factor which by the play of conscience and the love of traditions fondly clings to the memories of the past and guards against sudden throwback or breach in the natural course of evolution.

Besides these positive achievements, Islam has had profound negative influences as well, which are not less important from a historic point of view. The early conquests were directed against the powerful states of the seventh century, and after the fall of the Sassanian empire, the Byzantines remained the only formidable foes. After a wonderfully rapid success in the beginning, the advance came to a halt in the East, and the Muslims sought to gain mastery of the world which in the

sense of the middle ages was the "basin of the Mediterranean". By a long circuit along the African coast, across the Spanish peninsula they strove to find their way to Central Europe and from there take the course of the Danube eastward to Constantinople. The blows which Charles "the hammerer" delivered to them frustrated their design, which if successful would have led—as Gibbon surmises—to the chanting of the Koran in the British isles today. The advance of Islam was stopped on the field of Tours, but the danger continued unabated, and the constant threat of the Crescent led to the strengthening of Papal power and the consolidation of its supremacy over temporal princes and the organization of Europe under the aegis of the Pope. The fruits of this Christian organisation were the Crusades which in spite of all the hardship and the accompanying evils and grave strategical blunders, proved a beneficent influence in the history of European culture. The curtain of darkness which covered Europe during the middle ages was First torn asunder by the illumination brought home by the returning Crusaders with their tales of wonder, chivalry and observation of distant climes and religions.

Herodotus had remarked long ago that an eternal struggle was going on between the East and the West. This conflict, like the clashing of waves has however served throughout the ages as a potent factor in historic evolution by bringing into play the forces of both offensive and defensive on either side. While the Christian world in the West was obliged to organise its state-powers in defence of its creed against the onslaught of Islam during the middle ages, Islam in its turn became organised in the East under the pressure of the Crusades, and when the Moors of Spain had to yield to the self-conscious advance of the Christians, the territory lost was soon more than compensated for by the gain which the Ottoman Turks achieved in the South-East of Europe and by the Baberides in India.

In the first quarter of the 16th century Islam with its splendid military organisation made a serious bid for world sovereignty at a time when the Christian states were engaged in a fatricidal strife in which the devout Catholic monarch Francis I of France was actively supported by the Caliph. The

year 1526 witnessed the battle of Mohacs in which Hungary was lost to the Crescent, and the inroad of Baber to India, while 1527 is memorable for the *sacco di Roma* as a result of the unplacable enmity between the House of Bourbon and the Catholic Habsburgs. A few years later the whole of Europe lay in the throes of the wars of the Reformation, and no Christian army could be mustered equal to the regulars of the janissaries. Islam was already pressing on Vienna, the central stronghold of European culture, when the danger itself awakened resistance and through military valour tactical superiority was gained over the Turks which averted the over-running of Europe by the Mahomedans. The grip of the Turks on South-East Europe was not however relaxed.

The long rule of Moslems over this part of the continent left its indelible traces in the social structure of the country. The prolonged state of subjection necessitated and perpetuated the latifundia with a feudal aristocracy, and retarded the liberation of the serfs and the free devélopment of an indigenous middle-class. It weakened the once compact masses of Bulgarians, Serbians and Magyars, and broke up the once uniform population of these countries into numerous nationalities which in the beginning of the 19th century, at the awakening of nationalism in the West of Europe, began to clamour loudly for independent sovereignty and thus ultimately led to the dismemberment of the Åustrian empire producing a condition of instability and chaos in the Balkan peninsula.

The history of Islam is inseparably interwoven with the fate of the world. The leading motives in the history of European politics and culture cannot be properly understood without a minute study of Islamic history, while Islam still continues to be a dominant force in Asia and Africa. Such a study must cover a period of fourteen centuries, and range over a territory larger than any empire in existence. It has numerous sub-divisions, and it includes the study of linguistics, philology, history, sociology, and politics. It is inconceivable that the whole field could be surveyed by a single worker, or even a single group of workers. A whole class of scholars, working on a co-ordinated plan, must unite to achieve a task so great.

The material dispersed through the medium of a dozen of languages has grown so big that the organization of a library on scientific principles will itself be a great step forward in the promotion of Islamic studies. Through the generosity of H.H. the Nizam-ul-Mulk of Hyderabad it has become possible to establish a chair for Islamic Studies at Santiniketan, where, under the beautiful Sal-trees, a new foundation for the synthesis of world culture is being firmly laid under the guiding influence of Rabindranath Tagore. And we now appeal to all who have the cause of Islamic studies at heart for books and manuscripts, and also for further benefactions for the maintenance of advanced students and research workers. We have every confidence that our appeal will not be in vain, and that it will be possible to create at Santiniketan, "the Abode of Peace", a living centre for the study of the history and culture of Islam—"the Religion of Peace".

5

New Movements in the World of Islam

I. Arabia

The religion of Islam had its origin in the soil of Arabia, at a particular time and under particular conditions of cultural environment. It was, however, destined to spread to countries, the soil, climate, culture, and civilization of which were entirely alien to the Arabic people and to the ideas which they brought along with them. The religion of Islam was proclaimed to universal mankind, though in the Arabic tongue, by an Arabian Prophet. Its marvellous success on the battlefields transformed the community of Muslims into a state, a realm, an empire. The religious teaching gradually developed into a disciplinary force, a system of law, and finally created a culture having distinct characters of its own. The starting point of this mighty culture was Mohamed, the Prophet and his Book, but the impelling force was supplied by Arab bravery, and a lack of organization on the part of its opponents. Its development was helped by the absorption of practical ideas of statecraft from Hellenistic sources. Arab social life was elevated to another plane than that of the desert, which had given birth to Islam, and Islam in its new interpretation developed into a richer source of culture than it was before the conquests had begun. The religion of Islam extended and broadened into a disciplinary force which satisfied not only the emotional aspira-

tions of the human soul, but regulated his doctrinal belief, jurisprudence and daily life.

In all these developments two factors were all the time acting and reacting upon each other: a revealed doctrine, and the individual interest of the different social groups. Neither of these factors remained stationary or unchanged in their dynamic force or efficiency. The revelation profoundly influenced the moral, mental, and physical habits of those who believed in it, and the inherited moral, mental, and physical traits of the believers, imperceptibly but nevertheless inevitably, directed the course of the interpretation and application of the doctrine. A mutual adjustment of the two forces at work took place through centuries. New flourishing societies sprang up which making use of the indigenous material developed under the influence of a doctrine which sometimes helped and sometimes checked their growth.

The driving force in human society is the spirit of self-preservation which adjusting itself to the physical surroundings at first concentrates on the mere task of surviving, and then creates a moral and mental environment suitable for its own needs out of the many sympathetic and antipathetic forces of the time. Just as man has to fight against the unfriendly and hostile geographical forces of nature, so he has to carry on a constant war against the social forces of his time, the seemingly unchangeable creeds, beliefs, superstitions, and scientific theories. Man lives in symbiosis with earth by which he is reared, fed, and shaped, and which he at the same time conquers, subjugates, and moulds to his will. Man also lives in symbiosis with his emotions, beliefs, and reasoning. The history of Islam is full of these social struggles of man by which he and his environment, both geographical and social, became mutually adjusted.

But what is Islam ? Has the doctrine always remained the same ? Was the character of the spiritual life or the type of social life the same throughout the centuries ? By no means ! Islam is not a readymade edifice immutable and rigid. No human society, whatever the creed it is based on, is. Islam changed in its territorial extension, if we regard it as a state. Its adherents owed allegiance to diverse rulers and inhabited

dissimilar climates with dissimilar traditions, subject to dissimilar ethnic influences, if we look at the ethnographical side of Islam. It represented the Arab race against non-Arabs at one time. In later times it stood for the organising power of a non-racial commonwealth under pious caliphs in whose courts the idea of universalism created a pacifistic air of culture and which became enfeebled by the lack of national consciousness. After the fall of Baghdad it was the watchword of any army which was in need of a cohesive religion. Islam has many aspects: revelation, religion, community, state, and culture. Each of these aspects has been varied in its changes in different times, and still all are comprised under one word: Islam. The same word is applied to the people too who from diverse origins accepted the creed but were never homogeneous in their economic, social and spiritual aspirations and capacity.

In countless books, written both for and against Islam, the word Islam has been loosely used for a system opposed to Christianity, without clearly defining what Christianity is. Such a counter-position of Islam and Christianity may be useful, when we speak of the role which "Islam" has played in history as an anti-pole to "Christian" interests, or to "Christian" politics. We then distinguish Islam as a socio-political group belonging to the Islamic religion as opposed to the socio-political groups of the Christian creed. It is necessary to remember, however, that in the antagonism between Islam and Christianity of by-gone centuries, it was not the doctrines of religions which were at warfare with each other, but the two communities which happened to profess the two different creeds.

The war between the West and East is everlasting—says Herodotus and when he adds that woman was the cause of all the evil wars, he may be interpreted to mean that hunger, jealousy, love of property, vanity and self-aggrandizement have been the human motives of history. Here also the same motives had their play, but the resulting conflicts produced curious results. Just as in the intercourse of trade and commerce there is both the clash of interests as well as mutual benefit, the conflict of Islam and Christianity led to wars as well as to borrowings of culture from each other. The crusades, enterprises which were entirely unjustified and misconceived

from a strategical point of view, were provoked by the capture of the Holy Land by Muslims, an event which appealed equally to the sentiments of the religious devotee and to the lust of the rapacious adventurer. The crusades stimulated among Europeans a healthy curiosity in peoples beyond Europe, and ultimately helped the advancement of knowledge. But did all these indirect but far-reaching effects have anything to do with the theology of Christianity or Islam ? Again, under the pressure of "Islam", Popery could rally its forces and impose itself on secular governments in Europe, but was it the theology of Islam which strengthened the position of the Pope ?

Similarly we must be very careful in examining the causes of historical phenomena which are rashly ascribed to the influence of Islam or Christianity pure and simple. Science has progressed immensely in Europe since the 18th century. Literature and general learning have advanced beyond measure. The countries of Islam on the other hand have been stagnating since the 15th century in every department of the human mind. The Muslim armies have made new conquests of territory only, without achieving new conquests of the mind. Is it legitimate to ascribe these phenomena to Christianity or to Islam ?

Progress in the Muslim East was more rapid in the 9th and the 10th centuries than in the Christian West, and Arabic was besides Latin the classical language of the middle ages. (*Graeca non leguntur* !). Can we ascribe these achievements to Islam theology ? Why did Islam, if its theology or its jurisprudence or its general spirit was so conducive to progress at one time, lose all its mental energy a few centuries later, while the Muslim armies were still irresistible on the battlefields of Europe and Asia ? The Ottomans organized a standing army in the 15th century which ushered in all the technical improvements of the implements of warfare in Europe. At one time Turkey had the best gunneries and battleships, and it understood the art of strategy as well as any of the nations of Europe because it had attracted the best experts from different countries. While the whole of Europe could hardly muster an army of 40,000 men under a single command, the Ottomans wielded a fighting instrument of regulars comparable only to the Roman legions. At the same time the Turks engaged

Greek architects to build the sumptuous mosques at Constantinople in imitation of the Hagia Sophia, in which they continued to teach scholasticism and the cosmogony of Ptolemy. But Islam learning scarcely advanced beyond its achievements of the 11th century. In the 18th century when Turkey had ambassadors at the courts of France, Germany and England, who had the opportunity to observe daily the mighty progress of science and literature, Islam still clung to its mosque-schools, and its mediaeval programme. Was Islam responsible for the irresistible armies of Turkey and Christianity to blame for the inefficiency of its generals? Was Islam to blame for the pitiable backwardness in learning and literature, and Christianity to be praised for the advancement of science? We must look elsewhere for the explanation.

In the eternal struggle which man wages against nature and against his own cumbrous mental inheritance, the European peoples succeeded in liberating themselves earlier from the shackles of dogmatism. Discoveries and inventions broke the old fetters. It is true that the study of Aristotle and important discoveries of physical and chemical laws in the 11th century had to a great extent loosened the hold of many orthodox dogmas of Islam, but the Muslim physician did not yet dare to proceed to study anatomy. Christian dogmatism had also similarly obstructed the way to free inquiry, and the blood of numberless martyrs of human progress stains a sombre but sublime Calvary. The Muslim East was not devoid of martyrs, as bold and fearless in their conviction as their Christian brethren, but their life-blood ebbed away in vain. The cause for which they were flayed alive had no connexion with the liberation of the human mind from its stifling fetters. But this difference between these Christian and Muslim martyrs was due neither to Christian nor to Islamic theology.

Men, living in a mild climate, in a geographical situation open to the sea, well-fed, inured to hard work, who had acquired great powers of endurance and strength of character, were more formidable foes to material or mental tyranny than their fellow-beings who were shut in by hopeless deserts and surrounded everywhere by groups of people suffering from a

similar autocracy of dogmatism in religion and government to theirs. The Quakers and North-England Protestants could find a new home in the new world, and the thoughts and men persecuted by the inquisition were readily admitted into Protestant countries, just as the persecuted learning of Hellenism had been in the capital of the Abbassides in the 8th century.

Education in Europe liberated itself from the shackles of dogmatism during the Reformation which saw the starting of secular schools and the opening of doors to free investigation. In Muslim countries on the other hand education remained confined to the mosque which claimed to be the supreme adjudicator of all physical and mental activities of man. In Europe contending rulers in the 17th century founded universities and academies which vied with one another for the advancement of learning and enjoyed generous endowments from their rulers for the study of languages, laws, and customs of foreign countries. The several governments, although aware that learning may ultimately turn out to be a disagreeable weapon against autocracy, were incapable in the face of public opinion to check the growth of knowledge and the spirit of investigation. The encyclopaedists are said to have been the fathers of the French revolution, a statement which, if not to be taken literally, still characterises very well the liberal tendencies of science. Voltaire sentenced in France found refuge in England, and persecuted in his native country was invited to the court of Frederick the Great and of the Empress of Russia.

In the Muslim East the dozens of greater or smaller dynasties, although fighting bitterly among themselves, were all equally eager to suppress any attempts at liberating the mind or organizing the people against tyranny. The Church of Islam did not develop movements like those started by the Reformation in Europe, because it was never allowed to represent the interests of the people. Each and every Muslim government forced the Islamic Church to accept the fiction that the ruler is the shadow of God on earth, and that no action against his autocracy could be morally justifiable. Each and every Muslim state was an armed camp ruling over an intimidated population, the best spirits of which in the

darkest periods of Islamic history sought for an escape in mysticism from the hopelessness of earthly life. Mysticism, although touching the loftiest chords of the human heart and intellect, is no guide to the knowledge of the realities of earthly life. When the spirit of scientific inquiry had broken the last trammels of a burdensome dogmatism in the West, and the human intellect could intrepidly step forward to the philosophic systems of Kant, Comte or Spencer and vigourously develop new technical discoveries, the East, still immersed in the study of scholasticism, lay a helpless victim to the belief in a heavenly predisposition which only the *mollahs*, secure in their position by their subservience to autocratic rule, were privileged to interpret.

The progress in learning, in science, and in social life made the Western mind more deeply religious and more ethical, while it made Europe incomparably more efficient in man's incessant war against nature. The depth of religious feeling cannot be measured merely by the number of adherents to a church, and consequently this direction of human progress in the West has often been misunderstood. What ethereal heights has the belief in God reached of a man whose mind, trained by philosophers, can encompass the realm of experimental and descriptive sciences, admires and judiciously uses the achievements of technique, becomes enraptured over the heavenly symphonies of a Beethoven and gazes with a thrill at the works of a Rafael—compared with that savage who, in the 20th century, ignorant of all arts and knowledge, broods on the supremacy of the Arabic language as the mother of all human tongues. What can mankind learn from such a narrow minded materialist whose horizon ends with his own puny needs, and who has no concern for the material and spiritual freedom of millions !

In recent times the thing which first most strongly appealed to the Muslim East was the supremacy of the West on the battle-field. No Muslim army was suffered any more to extend the borders of *dar-ul-Islam*, may, the greatest Muslim power of modern times, the Ottomans, had to give way steadily before the forward march of their subject races. The Turkish armies were gradually withdrawn from the Balkans, and at the

same time the Turkish government lost hold on their Muslim subjects in Arabia as well. Thousands of Anatolian Turks who lie buried in the sands of Hidjaz had fought to restore order and maintain the rule of the caliph among the very people to whom Islam had been revealed. The Muslim Turks waged war on behalf of "Islam" against the non-Muslim Slavs of the Balkan as well as against the Muslim Arabs of Arabia. Was not "Islam" in these wars simply identified with the dynastic ambitions of the Ottomans against the interest of both the Turkish as well as the Arabic people ? The Muslim subjects of the Ottoman Empire were forced to live in ignorance and poverty, shut out from the facilities offered by modern science, heavily taxed, and slaughtered in wars which did not concern them, to serve the purpose of their rulers.

Those Muslims who had slipped under foreign rule slowly acquired a greater freedom and a better economic status than their "happier" brethren inside the *hawzat-ul-Islam.* They came into contact with European civilisation and observed with grief that the "frengees" succeeded better in all pursuits of life, and maintained a higher standard of living. Travellers and students who visited Europe and observed its prosperity returned with a sting in their heart, a burning reproach against fate which had allowed "Islam" to sink so low. (It was again this general term "Islam" which was invoked ; it was "Islam" which ebbed after its high flow during the conquests, the court of Baghdad, the palaces of Spain, the Ghaznevis, Timurides, Suleymans, and the rest.) They complained about the petrification of the *Idjtihad Mutlak* which lay dead, past resuscitation, and Ulemas were blamed for this deplorable decay. It is inherent in Islamic doctrine to believe that Muslims owe all their directions on life's thorny path to revelation. Naturally the discontented people could think of nothing else but an incorrect exposition and an erroneous interpretation of the Holy Book as the only cause of the evil. The real causes of the evil, manifold and various as they were, were not analysed or examined carefully, but were all lumped together under a single formula by a procedure which Comte would surely have relegated to the theological stage of human progress.

Islamic theology contemplates the whole of the universe

and all its phenomena to be subject to the pre-ordained decision of a tribunal consisting of the Holy Book, the traditions, and the consent of God-fearing scholars (*idjma'*). No achievement of the human intellect could escape the *imprimatur* of this mental tribunal which controlled and supervised all worldly phenomena from a theological point of view firmly rooted in time-honoured traditions. All innovations had to be submitted to the examination of this unseen tribunal working by its own peculiar instinct. This secured a strong safeguard against radicalism, and acted as a strong barrier, very sympathetic to rulers, against the democratization of Muslim states. Innovations unknown at the time of primitive Islam had to be legalised from time to time so that they might not be looked upon as heresies (*bid'a*). For example, the lithography of the Koran and the printing-press were formally declared lawful by a religious degree (*fatwa*) in 1729.

In Arabia itself the divergence between a liberal interpretation of the word and a narrow and literal interpretation was insurmountable. We may trace here the influence of climatic and geographic conditions besides certain factors of a social character. The literal interpretation has been confined to the torrid and arid zone of Arabia, where the scanty crop of the soil has been reflected in the droughty thoughts and emotions brought forth by its theologians. The inspiration for progress in Islamic culture came from outside Arabia and had its origin in non-Arab sources.

A characteristic example of the reaction against a liberal interpretation of Islamic doctrine may be seen in the puritan Ibn Taymiya (d. 1328) with the full name: Taki-addin, a Syrian polemic who represented the narrowest formalism of Semitic Islam. He had eyes for nothing but rigid forms and enforced an uncompromising formalism against the freer and loftier speculative methods of Al-Ashari and Ghazali. He spent his whole life in prosecuting heresies and denied any value to the progressive spirit of learning. He was a *pendant* to that *muedhin* who in his rapture over the unity of God exclaimed bewildered after chanting the *edhan*: "O God Almighty, forgive me that I pronounce Your Name immediately after the name of a mortal!" Ibn Taimiya waged a relentless war

against individualism, against the mystic fraternities of the Sufis, disavowed casuistic interpretations in jurisprudence and went so far in his rigid monotheism as to prescribe the honours rendered to the memory of the Prophet, and discountenanced visits to the tombs of saints. He led the life of an ascetic of the austerest stamp, but in his extreme iconoclasm and narrow bigotry was thoroughly honest. He spent the greater part of his life in the prisons of Cairo and Damascus where orthodoxy had confined him, and died not yielding in the slightest degree regarding the austere doctrines which he taught and adhered to till his death. His disciple Ibn Kayim al-Djauziya continued the work of intransigent puritanism and reaction. By the irony of fate both are being cited and exalted after the lapse of five centuries by the reactionary Wahhabis who swear by their tenets, and by the Muslim modernists who are republishing forgotten treatises in which Ibn Taimiya had drawn his sword against the superstitions introduced into Islam (*As-sarim al-maslul*). Ibn Taimiya who was an implacable foe to the cult of tombs was himself buried in the cemetery of Sufis, and his tomb is today an object of reverential homage of countless visitors !

The seeming contradiction is easily resolved. Ibn Taimiya represents in the eyes of the Wahhabis a return to Arabian Islam in its pristine purity, a return to the religion which was originally revealed in the Arabic tongue, a return to the Arabic spirit as yet devoid of innovations (*bid'a*) and interpretations of foreign extraction and foreign influence. Modernists on the other hand in all countries of the East take their stand on the roots of their own culture, and regard all foreign influences as corruption. Nationalism has become a watch-word in every man's land, and in its rapturous exultation it has succeeded in combining the most heterogeneous elements. Wahhabism and extreme nationalism both accept the same formula: "Return to our own, oust foreign intrusion!"

Wahhabism had its origin in the deserts of Arabia which from time immemorial has been the haunt of highwaymen and nomads who tolerated no rule or social organisation other than their own ancestral customs. Even Islam could

only temporarily combine them into unstable groups or incite them to unite for a raid. The moral teaching of Islam took root only in the heart of the towns-people. The Bedouins continued their blood-feuds, and their history remained practically the same everlasting story of tribal jealousy and consequent wars as it was before the advent of the Prophet. As it was the duty of the caliph to safeguard the passage to the Holy-Cities, the Western coast-routes were more or less under his control. The Ottomans, as holders of the caliphate on no other right than that of being the most powerful Muslim rulers, thought it essential to maintain their authority by the protection of the Holy Cities and the pilgrim-routes. But in every other respect Arabia remained practically independent of the Turkish government. The great Sherifs of Mecca who possessed a nominal ecclesiastic sovereignty were as powerless politically as the Turkish government, and were unable to control the tribes of the deserts.

The inhabitants of towns or oases mostly belonged to the most conservative and rigid of the four orthodox sects: that of Ibn Hanbal, while East-Arabia sheltered some Shafites, the coast of Kuweit some Malikites, and some oases of the East even a few Shiites who were the remnants of Carmathian sects. Economically the whole country was destitute. Not even a slowly increasing population could thrive on its soil, and a constant eflux into Mesopotamia and Syria just served to keep the remainder practically on the border-line of starvation.

As the economic conditions remained stationary, the social conditions have also remained practically unchanged since the time of the Prophet. In Arabia the historian has the rare opportunity to study the original social conditions petrified in their original surroundings, as time seems to have slumbered in the desert. Modern Arabian history often seems to be simply a mirage reflected from the past. Romantic figures of history still rise out of this land in ancient garment with an ancient speech, and, like a spectre, hover on the borderland of European civilization. In recent years Arabian nationalism has found expression in the revived doctrines of Ibn Taimiya, from which Mohammed Ibn

Abdul Wahhab (1703-1791) drew his inspiration.

Ibn Abdul Wahhab was born at Uyaina, a small town in Nadjd. His father's name, who was Hambalite ulema, although he was far from being in accord with the teachings of his son, gave the appellation to the movement. Wahhabi is more or less a nickname in Arabia; they call themselves *Muwahhidun* or monotheists, hereby expressing the core of their doctrine.

Muhammad went through the usual curriculum of Islamic studies. He probably developed his enthusiasm for the teachings of Ibn Taimiya at Medina, where he lived for some time. After the death of his father in 1740 he started to preach his doctrines publicly. He denounced all luxury in outward and inward life. He railed at the cult of offering homage to human being and to their graves. He reproached mysticism for its indifferrence to the Holy Law. The veneration of saints was abominable to him in any form. He did not recognise the consent of human authority in the interpretation of the Holy Word and preached the return to the two only sources of revelation: Koran and the primitive Sunna. "Ye have the book and the sunna", he said, "study the word of God and act in accordance with it even if the majority of men disagrees with you." He proscribed all speculative explanation in exegesis and jurisprudence and adhered, like the Zahirites, to the literal sense of the Koran and the traditions. He rejected all innovations by which Islam had tried to adapt itself to changing conditions, and waged an implacable war against all laxities introduced by the mundane spirit at the cost of the primitive austerity.

The Ottoman Sultan Murad IV, like other European monarchs of his time, proscribed the use and enjoyment of tobacco-smoking. The Turkish Sultan added coffee drinking to the list. Special decrees of the *mufti* which were passed later to release both from the anathema were based on public opinion of the learned. Ibn Abdul Wahhab refused to recognise the legality of this decree, and made further addition to the prohibited *bid'a*: music, silk-dress, gold and silver jewels. In accordance with the primitive tradition he approved of *istiska*, the prayer tendered to God for rain in drought, but

on the other hand, he strictly prohibited any prayer at the tomb of the saint or of the Prophet. He did not go so far as to prohibit the visit to the tomb but he forbade any prayer there.

The teaching of Ibn Abdul Wahhab roused anxiety even among the Hanbalites of Arabia. The pious conservatives probably sympathised with the tendency of his doctrines, but the insistence on the practice of the puritan tenets frightened those who daily indulged in their transgressions. For Ibn Abdul Wahhab was by no means a man of theory, he insisted on putting into practice whatever he taught. He opposed the usurers and the oppressors of Muslims, against whom he directed the powerful weapon of his fiery eloquence. He was applauded by the common people but secretly feared by the big personages, who finding his intrepid sermons inconvenient in many ways tried to expose and brand him as heterodox. He in his turn delivered a heavy blow against the authority of the ulemas by branding them as *kafirs*, and preached the holy war against them in return. In spite of all this apparent aggressiveness he strictly adhered to the code of morals as laid down in the Koran and Hadith. He regarded all duties enjoined in the scriptures as incumbent on himself, and considered himself nothing more than an obedient, humble servant of the unscrutinizable greatness of God. He never wearied in repeating the admonition: "Do not accept a single word uttered by me unless you are convinced of its truth; I do not pretend to be infallible."

In 1744, owing to the persecution of the ulemas, he was forced to seek refuge at Dariyya, in the house of the Emir Mohammed Ibn Sa'ud, and from this time the theological controversy entered on a political phase. Ibn Sa'ud agreed to become his patron, and concluded a pact with him. The religious propagandist had now gained the support of an executive authority (*ashab us-seyf*) behind him. Those who believed on their own account were invited to defend the faith, those who hesitated were bought over by the prospect of booty, those who resisted were forced by intimidation. The blood-feuds of the Bedouins were forbidden or restrained, and their restless energy was directed against the *kafirs*, at least those

whom Ibn Sa'ud and the Wahhabis regarded as such.

The new movement proceeded on parallel lines to its predecessor's in the 6th century. No other line of advance was possible. The state, in accordance with the Wahhabi doctrine, exacted one-fifth of the booty, and also collected the *zakat* or religious taxes from the believers. It converted the inhabitants of the rebellious province of Kasim into tenants on the principle of *kharadj*. The Arabia of the 7th century revived again. The state was based on the army, and this had to be kept busy to secure its maintenance. The nomads of Arabia always eager to join promising movements, got interested in Wahhabism, and prospects of booty soon attracted the Bedouins of Central and East Arabia to the camp of Sa'ud. Towards the end of the 18th century Sa'ud and his Wahhabis became the greatest power in the peninsula. They started harassing the pilgrims of Mecca, and robbing the presents of the Sultans. Then they attacked the Shia communities, and pillaged their sanctuaries at Nadjaf and Kerbela. In 1803 and 1804 they succeeded, after repeated attempts, to capture Mecca and Medina. A remarkable change now took place. The ulemas of the sacred cities, where the Prophet was born, where the Word of God was revealed and where Muslim piety had upheld, against threats of death, the teaching and example of the Prophet, were constrained to acknowledge their own *takfeer*, a confession that they had hitherto followed the path of infidelity! History repeated itself even to its details. The iconoclastic zeal of the Wahhabis destroyed the mausoleums and cupolas erected over the graves, and removed the heavy embroidered silk carpets of the Ka'ba. In Medina rapacious hands were not stayed by reverence for the tomb of the Prophet himself, which was robbed of its treasures hoarded up through centuries. The ulemas cowed by the *takfeer* flung at their heads were powerless against this vandalism. The Wahhabis continued to rob the pilgrims for years, and then finally brought about the suspension of *Hadj* (the pilgrimage to Mecca) altogether.

Encouraged by their unthwarted success, hordes of Arabs pressed northward into Syria and Mesopotamia. The Ottomans were powerless against Sa'ud, and were forced to entrust

the pacification of Arabia to the Pasha of Egypt, the mighty Muhammad Ali. It was not an easy task. Desert warfare has proved difficult for even the best organised armies, and without great strategical foresight has never led to tangible results. It is this peculiarity of the desert which has proved so embarrassing to modern armies, and not any inherent mystery, that has preserved some doctrines so successfully for years. The campaign of the Egyptians resulted in serious reverses until they had recourse to more glittering weapons than the sword. Money was set rolling amidst the Bedouins who, as in the time of the Prophet, had greater faith in gold than in sacred doctrines. The capital of Abdullah Sa'ud at Dariyya was stormed in 1818, and the Emir and some leaders of the Wahhabis were taken prisoner and sent to Constantinople where they were executed.

This was a hard blow to Wahhabism. The family of Sa'ud first retired to Riyad, then to Kuweit on the Persian Gulf, as they could not withstand the rivalry of their old foes, the Ibn Rasheed of Mount Shammar. The jealousy between the European Powers with their antagonistic policies now began to be felt in the waterless deserts where family squabbles and tribal feuds had been so long the only motives of a wearisome history. Still, just as the Abessynian march on Mecca in the memorable year of the elephant in the 6th century marked the final explosion of the tension between the Sassanian and the Byzantine empires, so in the beginning of the 20th century the mainspring of events in Arabia was set in Central Europe.

The extension of the political influence of Germany over Turkey, which found its economic expression in the building of the Baghdad railway stretching out its feelers of imperialism towards the Persian Gulf, created a new situation. The British Government looked for allies in Arabia against the Turko-Germanic alliance. In the 6th century the situation had been exactly similar. The Byzantines stationed the Ghassanides in Syria as buffers against the Lakhmides of Hira who were the feudatories of the Sassanians. These two Arab dynasties remained in continual conflict, and won and lost battles according as the fortune of warfare waxed or waned. They were the outposts of imperial interests located thousands of miles away from headquarters. Similarly, fights have again been going on

since 1900 between the Rasheedis and the Sa'udis. In the beginning the Rasheedis had gained the advantage. But later on Sa'ud invented a most efficient stratagem. He established several camps at important spots where he assembled his Bedouins and drilled them in the rigid doctrine and discipline of Wahhabism, and also taught them the art of agriculture. He formed a brotherhood of reliable and trustworthy elements to serve as a nucleus for fresh organisations. The Turks weakened by their defeat in the Balkan war were obliged to maintain a passive attitude in Arabia. Long before the *marcia su Roma* the Wahhabi *fascio* was created. They had their national pride, their rigid national creed devoid of all influences of foreign origin, and a national-religious *esprit de corps* which acknowledged implicit obedience to one idea and to one master. They even had their own distinct uniform—a counterpart to the black-shirts of Mussolini—a white garment and a white turban.

The brotherhood of Wahhabis, known as the *Ukhuwwat* was a military organisation ready to strike at any moment. Characteristically enough, like the first communities of Islam in the 6th century, the *Ukhuwwat* does not recognise tribal organisation. It is an organisation of Arabs, irrespective of tribal adherence, guided by the pristine ideals of Islam.

The shrewdness of Sa'ud realised its coveted fruits. In 1921 he defeated his old rival Ibn Rasheed, and massacred his family. In 1924 he victoriously entered Taif and Mecca from where Hussain Ibn Ali the great sherif and caliph had fled. The kingdom of Hadjaz ceased to exist. A new sultanate, that of Sa'ud, an independent Arabic state, stepped again on to the stage of history. Its intransigency in matters religious and national and its attitude towards foreign politics has found many adherents abroad. In India the *Salafiya* (conservatives) or *Ahl ul-Hadith* (traditionalists) are more or less inspired by Wahhabite tendencies.

The reactionary conservatism of the Wahhabis has suffered the same check at the outset of its political career as all reactionary movements do: they cannot stay the wheel of time which gradually wears off the rough crudities of doctrinal harshness. After the first fury of iconoclasm had spent itself

the Wahhabis developed a more moderate attitude towards the sanctuaries. The tombs were still demolished and some of the *mezars* of saints were declared apocryphal, but the treasures of the mausoleum of the Prophet were spared. As Sultan Abdul Aziz ibn Sa'ud happens to be a great coffee-drinker the interdiction of this beverage has lost its force.

Wahhabism is a militant state. It cannot remain satisfied with its achievements. In order to live up to the status which it enjoys in the Muslim world it must enlarge its economic boundaries. It must and will mitigate most of its doctrinal rigidities in order to gain adherents outside Arabia. A momentous step was taken towards this end by the king Sa'ud himself in his address to the Indian ulemas who appeared before him in 1925. In very moderate language he expressed his conciliatory attitude towards Sunnis. A platform was found on which conservative orthodox Muslims and Wahhabism may co-operate. The possibility and feasibility of such a co-operation was most keenly felt among Indian Muslims. Wahhabism represents to them a check to the spread of European influence and penetration. It represents, moreover, an Islamic state entirely independent of foreign sovereignty. In this matter even Muslim modernists look with sympathy at the strengthening of Wahhabism, and hope to find in it a basis for the reformation of Islam.

The reign of Sultan Abdul Aziz Sa'ud has again united Arabia under a single ruler. By the settlements of the *Ikhwan* (brotherhoods) he has succeeded in making the Bedouin elements take to agricultural pursuits, an achievement which is likely to start a new epoch in the economic history of Arabia. With the progress of the new economic era Wahhabism will continue to smooth down its doctrinal harshness which is a projection of the peculiar geographic configuration of Arabia, the desert land being the only country where it could flourish. The economic conquest and subjugation of the desert, the work of cultivating a soil hitherto barren, will open the country to the forces of civilization and will foster a friendlier attitude towards international co-operation. Only deserts can remain isolated, and only deserts can shelter a society separated by its ancestral and pristine exclusiveness from the rest of mankind.

II. Turkey

From the barren deserts of Arabia which brought forth the rigid tenets of Wahhabism we may turn our eyes towards Turkey. The same forces, which were at work in Arabia contributed to the mighty change in the empire of the Ottomans. The growth of nationalism in Turkey has proceeded along entirely different lines from the exclusive trend of Arabia. While the new-born nationalism in Arabia has crystallised in a reactionary movement, and gone back to a primitive interpretation of the Holy Word, the Turks opened their doors wide to the influence of Europe. The reasons are apparent. According to anthropo-geographers Turkey extend over a territory which is a connecting link between Asia and Europe. All the empires which centred around the Sea of Marmara shared in this dual nature. There never existed any strict boundary line of culture between South-East Europe and Anatolia. The Greeks had colonised the Asiatic Shores very early, and Asiatic influences had permeated the culture of Greece from the remotest times. The innumerable small islands in the Aegean archipelago, a broken up and submerged continent, still seem to act as a bridge between Asia and Europe in the South.

Besides the powerful influence of geographical situation we must take into consideration the character of the Turks as it developed through numberless centuries. The Turks were also a nomadic people, like the Arabs of the peninsula, but while the latter never could unite to form a state, the Turks were *par excellence* the state-builders of history. While the Arabs adhered to their strict tribal organisation which suppressed all traces of individual initiative, the Turks have always shown a sturdy individualism which produced great personalities and organisers who gathered enterprising spirits around them, and ever and anon built great empires out of the most heterogeneous elements. The fiction of a common blood-ancestry, which was jealously preserved and maintained in spite of contradicting facts, formed the basis of Arab society. The ideal of the Turkish race on the other hand was

the supremacy of the state-organisation based on the acceptance of a common rule irrespective of racial heterogeneity.

This difference in the character of the two races is clearly reflected in their cultural history. The life of Arabs in the peninsula which had but one outlet towards the North, permitted only a very restricted absorption of foreign influences. Its main elements were Semitic. The Turks roamed over a much wider territory. They were the carriers of cultural influences across an immense continent, from one end of Asia to the other. They were good assimilators and absorbed readily whatever they found suitable for their own purpose. In their role of state-builders they naturally looked at the practical side of things. Abstract speculation for speculation's sake was not the thing they cherished or cared for. They have not had leisure for this. They were pre-eminently an active people, and activity *ab ovo* prevented every kind of dogmatism. Instead of vague speculations practical methods took hold of their mind and helped them towards a sound eclectic positivism. While the Arabs were born formalists and the Persians born idealists, the Turks were born organizers and administrators. These peculiarities of their character find expression in the structure of the three respective languages: the mathematical rigidity of Arabic, the volatile richness and beauty of Persian, and the lucidity of Turkish.

The natural gifts of a people to a great extent determine the trend of its future history. The Turks were never fanatical, their natural disposition which made them the leaders of so many races, and the representatives of so many cultures *a priori* prevented such an one-sided attitude. The Turks became Shamanites, Christians, Buddhists and Muslims in turn, and in the case of each religion for the time being they were staunch adherents and obeyed all the injuctions faithfully, but none of these creeds appear to have become part and parcel of their inner nature. In all religions they discovered and emphasised that special quality which was in harmonious accord with their innate racial character. They knew how to obey and how to command. They inherited a sense of discipline which in the sphere of thought readily lent itself to the methodical acceptance of doctrines. As Shamanites they served

in the conquering hordes of Attila, of Bayan, the Avar, and carried the banner of victory from the wall of China to Central Europe under Djingiz Khan. As Muslims they took up the sign of the Crescent and posted it on the church of Hagia Sophia and of the Holy Virgin at Buda. They occupied a larger territory than any other army, covered a wider area than any other culture, but they never interfered forcibly with the social or religious life of the subjugated races. They were tolerant to such an extent that they adopted the art, customs and language of their subjects, and utilised everything that was useful and shed much of their own which became antiquated. This liberal spirit finally proved detrimental to their own interest for in spite of a unique military organisation, the subjected peoples never became absorbed by them and never ceased to continue their individual life. The Turks have ruled over many countries and governed their peoples but never amalgamated them. In Russia when after centuries of Tatar rule, the Russians threw off their yoke, only scanty vestiges of Turkish influence remained in the Russian character ; in South-Eastern Europe, only a few minarets bear witness to the glorious history of Islam in those parts which were also abundantly fertilised with Turkish blood. Even in Muslim countries, in Arabia, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Persia and India sumptuous buildings are the only tangible evidence of a magnificent past in which Turkish lords wielded the sceptre of command.

Intrepid and merciless on the battlefield, they were humble in the abode of the learned. They adopted the religion of the Arabic Prophet, and learnt to master the niceties of the Persian language and imbibed its spirit to such an extent that they lost their own language in the process. Their artistic and expressive language gave way to an elegant, sonorous but artificial literary idiom, which pleased the ear of the pedant and the dilettante, but was incomprehensible to the common people. The Turk was an aristocrat, proud of rank and social status, and nothing was dearer to him than refinement in the mode of living and in language. This aristocratic spirit was essentially the spirit of the soldier, of the knight, whose highest ambition was to serve his lord, and to assume

all the outward distinctions characteristic of lords. In his fidelity, in his *esprit de corps* he never hesitated to subordinate his own personality to the cause or to the head of his community.

"Rule and govern" was the watchword of the Turks, and this spirit created a dynastic atmosphere so paramount that it obscured the interest of the people. The Islamic religion which the Turks adopted in its Persianised form was a great incentive to lead them onward on the road of glory. Where Turks had conquered before out of the mere lust of conquest, now they could do so in the fulfilment of a noble inspiration. The conquests of the Turkish race received a moral sanction: the propagation of the faith and conversion of pagan unbelievers. As obedient servants of an idea or duty imposed on them they executed this task so unselfishly, with such a disregard of their own interests that while the *dar-ul-Islam* was being extended by them across India and Central Europe they lost their own individuality and nationality.

The monotheistic idea of Islam regarding Godhead agreed very well with an undisputed unitary form of government in wordly affairs. Moreover, Islam did not recognise any differences between nationalities; the word *ummat* meant the indivisible commonalty of all Muslims belonging to different branches (shu'ub) of language, race, or colour. The Turks had a similar conception regarding the empire, in which under Turkish government many non-Turkish elements could be conglomerated. The notion of a Caliph in Islam as executor of the Holy Law could easily be translated into that of *Sultan*, the head of the army and of government. Henceforth the Turkish people became a branch of Islamic *ummat* and the conquered Christian peoples were the "flock" (*ra'ya*) under the protection of the Sultan, but the Turkish people themselves lost their consciousness of Turkish nationality. They ceased to consider themselves superior in any way as the ruling caste of Turks; as Muslims they were equal to all their co-religionists. The fact that their ebullient valour and restless activity were exploited to further Islamic ideas prevented the growth of Turkish nationalism.

The dynasty of the Ottomans which had grown out of the primitive conditions of a village community into the

aspirations of all Turkish knights errant: the aspirations to conquer, to govern, and to rule, was driven into the fold of Islam by the geographic and ethnic situation of Anatolia. The *Kay-khan* Turks who were called Ottomans after their brave leader, Sultan *Osman*, were thrust into Anatolia by the wave of Tatars in the middle of the 13th century, and were converted to Islam at that time through the example of their Seldjukian kinsmen. Knight Ertogrul, the founder of the house of Osman was probably one of the first converts. Islam gave them the moral support to extend their power over the Byzantine Greeks, to consolidate the territory over which they had sway, and to transplant their seat to the Balkans, and established a powerful state in Europe long before they had a strong foothold in Anatolia. The dynasty of Osman strengthened its prestige by adopting Islam which connected it with time-honoured traditions, and secured to it an opening which the superstitious belief in Shamanism would have denied. Soon after the death of their first Muslim Sultan (Osman died in 1326) the name of the Ottomans as the new warrior-representatives of Islam became awe-inspiring in Europe. There had been frightful onslaughts of Turkish hordes on Europe before the advent of the Ottomans. The pagan Petsenegs, the Cumanians and the Tartars intruded as far as the basin of the Danube, but after their success on the battlefield they settled down peacefully, were converted to Christianity, and became racially submerged in the surrounding population. The Ottoman Turks, however, through their adoption of Islam gained a cultural frame which preserved them as a distinct racial and political entity, sharply marked out from others.

The state-system of the Ottoman was a combination of their Central-Asiatic Turkish spirit and that of Islam. The dynasty made its position secure by creating a distinct class of followers who were the slaves of the ruler. Most members of this class were of foreign blood and extraction; taken prisoners as children they had been converted to Islam and trained to serve their lord. These Christian children forgot their parents, and denied their nationality; and were completely cut off from any other allegiance than subservience to the

Sultan. It was with such orphans that the irresistible army of Janissaries was formed. It was these renegades who controlled the government (*ashab-i-kalem*) and the army (*ashab-i-seyf*).

They ruled over the people who were called "Turks," a word which gradually came to mean: *boers*, and they directed the campaigns against the world of unbelievers. The *bailos* of Venice vividly describe the twofold character of the Ottoman state-system. The religious functions and the administration of justice were kept in the hands of pure-blooded Turks, while the executive power and the control over the administrative institutions belonged to Muslimized Christians. Although religion was exploited in the interest of dynastic autocracy, still it was not Islamic theology that was the ruling principle in the Ottoman state but the unquestionable authority of the Sultan. The democracy of the Caliphate, as conceived in the golden age of Islam when the Caliph was elected by a shake of the hand (*bay'at*)[6] and accepted by public opinion, was very different from the rule of the Sultan who was overlord and master of his slaves, his ministers and his army. Anybody from the common people could be elevated to the highest rank or dismissed from an important post at the whimsical pleasure of the Sultan. Even the appellation of the subjects of the Sultan was: "slave" (*kul*).

This autocratic organization of state power rendered its "slaves" immune to disintegrating influences, by the focussing of human interest in personal ambitions. No other social organization was tolerated besides that of Islam, which, owing to the religious loyalty to the defender of the faith which it enjoined prevented the growth of nationalistic ideas. There was no Turkish nation, only a Muslim *ummat* and the state of the Ottoman dynasty (*devlet-i-somaniye*). The loyalty of the Turks to their rulers was proverbial. The steppe knew nothing more potent than a personality, and all steppe-inhabiting peoples were welded into a nation not on the principle of ethnic homogeneity but by the cohesive force of the compelling personality of a single leader. The organization of the Ottoman state had at its centre the personal influence of the ruler. When the king was an active, warlike and just ruler

like Bayezid the Thunderbolt, Mehemed II, Selim I, or Suleyman the Magnificent, the Ottoman state-power and the countries over which it ruled were mighty and prosperous; the system functioned at its best. But when the ruler was a puppet in the hands of his harem or his ministers the whole empire suffered; this was the great drawback of the system. Since the middle of the 17th century, a degenerate spirit permeated the seraglio and infected the machinery of administration with corruption. The armies of the Ottomans remained no longer undefeated, because the commissariat was controlled by corrupted *pashas* who were more interested in profiteering, and the army was officered by commanders who were more concerned with their personal loot and the safety of their harems than with the efficient conduct of a campaign. The Sultans discontinued the ancient custom of going to battle themselves, and idling away their life among the women of the harem, entrusted the army to the care of *pashas* who began to indulge more and more in booty-seeking raids than in regular warfare. Women, leisure, and bragging became the chief objectives of life of the Ottoman leaders. The common people remained uncorrupted for a long time. The reverses on the battlefield humiliated them, but a still lingering confidence in the valour of Turkish armies helped to stay the collapse of the Empire. "The Muslim army cannot be beaten, but it requires a commander and not a bandit at its head"—was the opinion of the common people. But conditions were growing more and more unfavourable for the emergence of such a leader.

After the relief of Vienna by Prince Sobieski and the total discomfiture of the Ottoman army (1683), the mighty edifice of the Turkish Empire began to crumble down with unchecked rapidity. The old machinery of administration did not work any more. The system of government broke down altogether and no new system was established in its place. The Chrisitian armies of the Habsburgs advanced from point to point, and regained most of their lost provinces. People in Europe began to say: "Islam has lost its power, and has proved inferior to Christianity, and the time has come for the Cross to take revenge upon the Crescent." The causes and events which led

to the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire had however no connection whatever with Islam or Christianity. As we have already indicated the real factors were to be sought for in the social conditions and in the men concerned and not in their religions. For example, the liberation of Hungary from the Ottoman yoke was welcome to the Hungarians only so long as the Catholic Habsburgs did not start persecuting the Protestants with so much zeal and religious intolerance that the "liberated Christian brethren" fled to the countries of Islam where the Sultans granted them hospitable refuge.

A deep slumber seemed to envelope Turkey for nearly a century. Province after province was lost, but nothing happened. Gradually a new problem arose. Old national feelings revived in the liberated provinces. The 18th century saw the birth of nationalism, and the word "patriot" was coined by Frenchmen in a strictly nationalistic sense. The *ra'yas* of the Ottoman empire awoke to national consciousness, and they began to clamour for rights. Foreign Powers secretly or openly sympathised with the movement, for they all hoped to gain something in the chaos likely to be created in Turkey. The social and economic struggles of the *ra'yas*, accompanied by political intrigues, were further reinforced by cultural motives as well. The spread of learning and new movements in literature gave a great impetus to the growth of self-consciousness among subject races. Everybody was on the move: Greeks, Serbians, Wallachians; only the Turks seemed to have remained passive spectators of this mighty onrush of nationalism. The Turkish Government clung helplessly to old-world methods of intimidation and naively pinned its faith to providence. It could not understand the drift of recent events in European history which tended to the development of national states with parliamentary representation in supersession of absolute monarchies. The French Revolution was a great call to arms followed by series of revolutionary outbreaks in Germany, Poland and Hungary, which suppressed on the battlefields and in prisons lived in the memory of the European peoples. The United States entered the arena with its republican government, and Spanish imperialism was eliminated from South America with a passionate hatred. These might have served

as warnings to Turkish statesmen. But history is taught to school-boys only as a gentle pastime and treated as it were a telephone-directory with long lists of names and numbers rather than a philosophic study.

The situation became precarious. Sins of centuries could not be atoned for in decades. Moreover, nobody was even prepared to own his sins. A confession of guilt would have led to a complete overthrow of the hereditary principle of government. A different course was adopted: to introduce reforms piecemeal under the pressure of the ambitious foreign powers. At last the Crimean war broke out. The European powers were at cross purposes. Their mutual antagonism saved Turkey for the time being, but the extravagances of the Sultan and the relapse into a blind belief in *kismet* sealed its fate for the future.

For Turkey the Crimean war was a memorable event. It was the last European war which had its romance ; it was an expedition full of enthusiasm and expectations, and in spite of big reverses it did shatter the power of any of the combating parties. It may be regarded as the war of liberalism, and the victory of the ideals of the revolutionary movements of 1848 over conservatism and absolutism. In this war autocratic Turkey stood on the side of liberal progressivism against absolutistic Russian autocracy. This novel position of Turkey necessarily led to a more sympathetic attitude towards the liberal tendencies of political life in Europe.

We can trace the beginning of Turkish rejuvenation to the liberalising Western influences, the door for which was first opened by the Crimean war. Turks fought side by side with the French and the English; they began to understand one another, and while the French soldiers admired the unsurpassed bravery of the Turkish army, Turkish officers appreciated the marvellous progress of the military technique of Europe.

Overwhelmed with an unquestioning admiration of everything European, the Turks started imitating blindly. It was the French whom they idolised above every other nation. Turkish students were sent to France, and French teachers were invited to take charge of Turkish schools. Works of French literature were translated into the Turkish language, and European literary forms introduced into Turkish literature. From

Europe, too, Turkey had her first lesson in patriotism, the greatest motive power in modern history, and discovering its value as a national asset, soon made a cult of it. Up till now the Turks had been contented to be simply Muslims, blood-drops in the *ummat-i-Muhammadiya*, without distinctive national traits, or a separate national consciousness. Outside the Holy Cities there was not an inch of earth which they had a right to revere. A Turk was born to die on the battlefield, a "martyr on the way to God". Contact with Europe changed all this, and bred a new outlook among the Turks. They saw the superiority of the European nations, as evidenced by their wealth and their culture, and sorrowfully compared it with their own misery and backwardness. Nationalism, the watchword of Europe, cast its magic influence on the mind of those honest and romantic Turks who came into touch with it. And slowly Turkey turned her eyes from the East towards the West. Sultan Abdul Medjid began to build sumptuous palaces in European style, which showed little influence of Asiatic traditions, and at a very heavy cost managed to Europeanise to a great extent the outward aspect of his capital.

The greatest and deepest change was however effected in the realm of spiritual life. The Turkish mode of thinking was a Persianised form borrowed from the Islamic East; the literary standards were those of Persia. All the poets and writers of Turkey were more or less blind imitators of Persian models. Even the Turkish language itself gradually lost its individuality ; it had absorbed so many Persian and Arabic words that in order to understand it properly a deeper knowledge of these two languages was necessary than that of Turkish itself. Although the language of the common people developed along natural lines, the literary idiom grew into a high-flowing, sonorous and artificial means of expression, flexible and impressive but very often driven to extremes of incomprehensibility, and was used more like a musical instrument than a vehicle of thought. There were two social classes in the Ottoman empire ; the subject people and the ruling caste, and parallel with these two classes two distinct languages grew up as well.

Slowly all this was changed; a new school of writers sprang

up, inspired directly or indirectly by European ideals. Persian literature lacks the harmonious structure of a well-proportioned work of art. It is full of the neat conceits and subtle fancies of many European poets of the middle ages. The Persian school delights in the soft tones and small details, which may be enjoyed apart from the whole of which they form parts, like pearls and precious stones taken out of a necklace. Each couplet of a *kasida*, each metaphor of a *ghazel* has a beauty of its own but has no reference to a whole. The Oriental enjoys the play of colour on the leaves of a single tree, the European looks at a landscape as a whole in which forests and fields are but specks of light and shade in the variegated pattern. In science too the Persian habit is to observe minutely and describe accurately things as they are, while the European mind is eager to discover the significance of things in relation to one another. We may say that the observation of the Persian is static, as it remains stationary around the one point in question, while the observation of the European is dynamic because it passes beyond the immediate object to its connexions. European literature is more concerned with conveying thoughts, and giving expression to sentiments ; it does not care for piling up polished words for the sake of the polish alone.

The aesthetic ideals of European literature however caught the imagination of such Ottoman writers as Shinasi, Sezayi, Namik Kemal, Ekrem, etc., who broke with the models of the Persian School, and began to write in the European style. They were also greatly impressed by the patriotic tendencies of European literature, and strove to combine aesthetic pleasure with a social aim: to serve the people. They were interested not in literature pure and simple, not in Goethe's *Lust zum fabulieren* ; but in literature as a means for serving patriotic ends, for the elevation of the people from its spiritual and social bondage. The spirit was entirely different from that underlying the composing of the Arabic *kasida*, which as its name implies, also had an aim, namely the winning of a reward from a generous patron of rhymes. Patriotism was an altogether new concept in Ottoman lands. It was unknown before Namik Kemal found a word for it: *watan*, which in

this sense had never been used before. The definition of *watan* as fatherland, the country where the Turkish tongue was spoken, where Turkish peasants sowed their fields, the country for which precious Turkish blood had been shed, slowly took root in the hearts of the Ottoman. But the issues did not become clear in a day. The decline of the power of the Ottoman was still confounded with the decline of Islam in general, and the interest of the Ottomans was continued to be identified with the interest of Islam as a whole. The heroi achievements of the Turkish armies under the command of thei Sultans were eulogised as fulfilments of the sacred duties o Islam, and in the exhortations tendered to the Turkish people the mighty figures of Islamic history, the conquest of the Saracens, the thrilling stories of the Moors were extolled t serve as models for imitation in the struggle for a better futur for the overtaxed, decimated and exploitated Turkish people The counterposition of Islam *vs*. Christianity in the works o Namik Kemal was a natural reaction to the attitude whicl Russia, as the patron of Oriental Christianity, very ofte illegitimately assumed in favour of the national aspirations o the Balkanic peoples. Turkish nationalism was supposed t have its origin in the blood of martyrs' shed for the sake o Islam and for the dynasty. This blood claimed recognition this blood clamoured for its rights !

The political party of young Turks grew out of the sam movement. It professed strict adherence to the dynasty and t the Islamic religion. The name: "Young Turks" was not o Turkish origin. No educated person would have tolerate being called a "Turk," whether old or young. The prope name for the ruling class was "Osmanly," but as most of th partisans of representative government were soon obliged t take refuge in France, and as they gradually became known i France, the appellation of *jeune Turc* came to mean the liberal-minded youth who wished to replace the autocratic form o government by a parliamentary system. The leader of th group was Ahmed Midhat, a shrewd but straightforwar politician, who would not have shrunk from violence i necessity demanded.

A clash of interest between the seraglio and the peopl

ended with the suppression of the representatives of the latter. The dream of an Ottoman parliamentary government was shattered by the new Sultan Abdul Hamid. A regime of nervous rope-dancing began in the effort to satisfy the demands of rival intriguing European Powers, in the constant attempt to play off one Power against another, to preserve intact the appearance of an imperial authority, and to keep order in the provinces of the empire. The wires of this grand puppet-theatre were concentrated in the hands of the Sultan himself, a historic figure worth close psychological study. A combination of an inexorable despot and a cowardly intriguer, a shrewd observer of human weakness and a clever artist to play with it, an able organiser of an Argus-eyed police-system and at the same time a victim to fears of his own creations, he foresaw that parliamentary reforms would inevitably remove authority from his hands. He based his policy on a balance of nationalities as a secure foundation for his own rule and dynasty. Frightened by the dethronement of his predecessors, he imprisoned his brothers and nephews, and lived aloof from the people in the modest palace of Yildiz Kyoshk outside the town and fortressed by a lofty wall. Fond of worldy treasures, he amassed an immense fortune of movable and immovable properties and yet denied himself all luxuries except the pleasures of a harem, and did not indulge in any human vanities. His own usual dress was a simple and almost shabby frock-coat ; on the day of Selamlik (Friday)-prayer, among the gorgeous robes of his cringing *pashas* he appeared almost like an ascetic in the unpretentious clothes of an *efendi*. He interdicted all technical inventions like the electric light, telephone, and motor-cars, and proscribed all foreign political and scientific literature from entering his country. But he himself maintained an extensive translation office of his own in which any European book he took a fancy to was translated into Turkish within a few days and read to him by his secretaries. The collection of this private manuscript library, compiled by some dozen competent translators and writers, numbers several thousands of volumes, and has now been incorporated in the University Library of Constantinople. In sleepless nights when no light was allowed to burn in Constan-

tinople from the fear of secret signals to revolutionaries, the window of the Sultan's bedroom was ablaze, behind which the *padishah* sat up on his simple couch and listened to the blood-curdling stories of the French revolution read out to him from behind a screen.

The Young Turks, who wrote the history of his regime and studied his private life after his fall, failed to do justice to Abdul Hamid, the politician. It is true that he neglected to strengthen the Turkish elements of his empire at the cost of the *ra'yas*, but he fostered far-reaching imperialistic plans. He was not only the Sultan of the Turkish nation, but the Caliph of the faithful, and his eyes were fixed on a policy which had been the guiding motive of his dynasty for centuries: the advancement of Islam. In opposition to the intrigues of the European Powers he thought of rallying those forces which seemed best able to counteract the effect of European aggression. In opposition to Pan-Slavism which seemed to him to be the most threatening ogre of his empire, he initiated a new movement of "Pan-Islamism". Pan-Slavism was the watchword of Russian imperialism ; it completely neglected the welfare of the Russian people who groaned under ignorance, poverty and oppression at home, and yet were force to make great sacrifices abroad for the liberation of their racial brethren in the Balkans. During the Russo-Turkish war of 1877 the Russian soldiers gained the alarming experience that most of the "oppressed Bulgarian Christians" lived in better conditions and in comparatively easier circumstances than they themselves. But Imperial Russia wanted an exit to the seas, and this economic necessity led to a policy of expansion which was deliberately based on the delusion that racial affinity must needs create common interest. Very few of the Russian politicians were capable of discerning the insurmountable cultural and social differences and the clash of economic interests which separated the different peoples speaking a Slavic language. In these peculiar circumstances, Abdul Hamid looked for a counter-movement to the growing menace of Pan-Slavism in Pan-Islamism which in its possibilities was not at all a *quantite negligeable*. (The German Emperor William II had prided himself on being the friend of 300 millions of Muslims.)

But the actual strategy of the counter-stroke was fatally marred by a most unsystematic handling of the situation by the Sultan. After the crucial battle of Mukden in Manchuria when the defeated Russian armies fled before the victorious but equally exhausted Japanese, and revolutionary movements in Petersburgh compelled the intimidated Russian autocracy to conclude peace, Japan with a keen outlook for the future was anxious to secure allies among the discontented Muslim subjects of the Tsar. An unofficial movement was started to undermine the foundations of the Russian empire. The cry: the East for the Eastern peoples, was raised for uniting the Muslim Tartars, the Indians, the Persians, and the Turks against their common enemy, the Russian imperialists. The idea of a Pan-Asiatic organization under the leadership of the Mikado was slowly emerging as a political factor of importance in the struggle against Russian supremacy. An Inter-Islamic Congress at Tokio (Tokyo) was being planned and discussed, and Ottoman public opinion eagerly looked forward to this new movement. Turkish newspapers which laboured under a strict censorship in political matters, were allowed to expatiate upon the subject, and the idea matured to the extent of selecting a delegate to be sent to Tokio as the representative of the Caliph. Mahmud Es'ad, Professor of Law at the University of Constantinople, was unanimously accepted as the fittest person for this honourable task. Then weeks and months passed away in inaction and the whole movement ebbed away. Was it merely a dream of Abdul Hamid or of his private *mullah* the dervish Abul'l-Khuda, that suggested such a step as a counter-movement against the menace from the North ? At an opportune hour when Russia lay helpless, it at least succeeded in demonstrating that Asia may yet get organized. The Pan-Islamism of Abdul Hamid however amounted to nothing more than a gesture. No international organization was created to strengthen the coherence of the Islamic peoples, or to consolidate the leadership of the Ottomans. The growth of Arab and Kurd nationalism hampered the development of a sound Pan-Islamic policy, and the backwardness of Turkey itself increased the dangers of separatist tendencies. The country had few rail-

ways, few roads, most of which were bad, and was so hopelessly handicapped by the ignorance in which its population was enveloped that progress was extremely difficult. No books were tolerated except harmless theological works, nobody was allowed to travel from one province to the other without a stringent passport. The name of the Sultan could not be uttered, and when it appeared in newspapers it was preceded by two lines of honorific titles; passive oppression stifled every kind of economic activity, and at the same time goaded the people to extreme opposition and despair. And this was the worst effect of the regime of Abdul Hamid.

The suppression of all liberal movements drove the opposition underground, and fomented revolutionary activities. The Sultan was deposed, and a premature constitution was established at a most unpropitious time without the nation having been prepared to handle it. Turkey had no allies, and at the dawn of Turkish freedom, the country was torn asunder by its warring nationalities. The Young Turks, full of enthusiasm and a sincere patriotism, were ill-versed in the teaching of history, and fondly hoped to secure the co-operation of their own nationalities as well as that of the European Powers for the building up of a modern Turkey. They ignored the views of the German historian Treitschke, that the application of a certain amount of force is necessary for building up or holding together the power of the state. It was not indeed necessary to go to the German historians for this lesson, for Islamic history was full of relevant examples. But the Young Turks, who had struggled against force for years, could not morally reconcile themselves to using it when they attained to power. Apart from their liberal principles of government, the country was divided by creeds, languages, races and cultures which generated forces of disruption. The shock of reality soon awakened the Young Turks from their sentimental dreams.

At the introduction of parliamentary government enemies arose in and outside the country. The parliament which had appeared to the Young Turks in exile to be a panacea for all evils proved a feeble substitute for government in reality. It was as its name implied a place where "much was talked,"

and gave rise to fine specimens of Turkish eloquence, but it lacked administrative power. Nationalist members strove to obtain a complete control over the authority of the state, and began to interfere with the army. From outside, the Great Powers concentrated on their policy of pacific penetration into Turkey. In the Balkan war the antagonism between France which wished for a victory of the Allies on one hand, and Germany and Austria which were more interested in a Turkish success on the other, became evident. The defeat of the Young Turkish armies in Thracia was vaguely felt as a defeat of German supremacy. The interest of heavy industries found expression in unofficial war-reports. French newspapers loudly proclaimed the superiority of Creuzot guns over those of the Krupp-make. Turkish politicians were divided in their opinion which course to take. The Young Turks unswervingly adhered to the German tutelage; most of their officers had studied at German military schools and had been deeply impressed by the invincibility of the German fighting machine. The conservative-liberals on the other hand inclined more to the French as they were disciples of an older school who had been inspired by French influence since Crimean war; they understood better the method of shrewd and cunning diplomacy and appreciated the masterly suppleness of the French diplomatic spirit. The Great War found Turkey hesitating and unprepared. The final decision was mainly due to the personal predilections of the Germanophile war minister Enver Pasha, aided by the flight of two German battleships to the harbour of Constantinople. The pressure of the Austrian and German ambassadors, punctuated by the naval guns, and the sympathies of the Germanophile Turkish ministers decided the issue. In spite of the protest of the Allies and the anxiety of the pacifists the battleships were clandestinely purchased and turned into Turkish cruisers. This provocation dragged Turkey into the whirlpool of the war.

In the half a century which has elapsed since the works of the young Turkish writers first appeared, Turkish literature has traversed a long road. The sonorous phrases even of Namik Kemal, Ziya Pasha or Abdul Hakk Hamid appeared cumbrous and gave way to the purer language of the people.

Turkish nationalism liberated itself from the bondage of the past. The Arabic tongue no longer occupied a sacrosanct position; conglomerations of foreign words without any meaning became obsolete. The Turkish language again became a means to express thoughts and not to conceal them. The older literature grew more and more alien in spirit to the Turks and were enjoyed less and less. Fuzuli, Nedim and Baki were often referred to by modern writers but were scarcely read; like the venerable old arm-chair in the corner, uncomfortable to sit in, the older writers were shoved into the background. The changing times created new ideas and new forms. Instead of the *ghazel* with its monotonous theme, European poetry with its great variety warmed itself into the hearts of the people. *Redjayizade Ekrem* was a pioneer of European poetic forms, and at the same time a master of the tenderest tones in the Turkish style. Dramatic literature produced a genius of extraordinary ability: Abdul Hakk Hamid who in his prose dramas soars to the level of immortality. French literary movements readily influenced the Turkish poets, and the impressionistic school soon found imitators in Tevfik Fikret and in that most ingenious writer Djenab Shihab Eddin. Prose literature found a new vehicle in the Turkish novel (called the "national" novel (*milli*) because it deals with social problems), and a number of writer contributed to create the typical Turkish novel of the present day: a symbolistic, romantic and melancholy story. Humouristic literature also developed rapidly as being most congenial to the Turkish spirit. All these literary productions reflect the slow but sure awakening of the Turkish spirit from its slumber of centuries. Every new literary work was a step forward in the liberation of the language from its foreign shackles, and also marked from day to day the advance of the Turkish people in their struggle to get free from both Asiatic and European despotism. Poets began to sing the songs of their own hearts, in the language of the people; novelists to describe in a popular form the lives of men of the people, and Turkish politicians began, at long last, to act in the interest of the people. Time-honoured words and expressions from the classics, familiar and cherished as they were to older ears and tastes, were rudely brushed aside to give place

to the words of the peasant of Anatolia. A new Turkish literature was created for the Turks, in the language of the Turks. Time-honoured institutions surviving from the glorious past were replaced by activities serving the interests of the living present. A radical change took place in the sphere of practical politics as well as in that of thought.

The road was long and full of big sacrifices. Turks had conquered the world in the service of an abstract religious idea, Turks had bled to death in the service of an absolutistic government. Bitterly disappointed with both, the Turks exclaimed: "We are Turks and nothing else!" The honorific appellation of "Osmanly" was dropped. It meant the thraldom to an inefficient and unnational dynasty. During the war the *fetwa* for *djihad* was responded to by nobody. One part of the Muslim world openly fought against the Turks. Where was the Turk to look for hope, which ideal could help him on, after the failure of both Islam and the Dynasty? The spiritual development of the last few decades which ushered in the era of nationalism readily answered: Trust yourself, your race, your own culture.

This idea of nationalism was vigourously propagated. A Turkish lady-writer, 'Khalide Edib, perhaps inferior as a novelist to her more talented contemporaries and yet more successful as a popular writer, portrayed in her novel: *Yeni Turan*, the struggle and the final victory of the new Turkish nationalism over Ottomanism. The novel exercised a magic effect, it became a most efficient means of propaganda. Its hero, the intrepid leader of Turanism, found numberless admirers and imitators. An indefatigable organiser, himself a remarkable poet, Hamdullah Subhi laid the foundation of a patriotic literary society the "Turkish Hearth" (*Turk Odjaghy*). A review was started with the title *Turk Derneyi* (Turkish Magazine). The new group was not ashamed to be called "Turk," and purposely put the hitherto unused word "*dernek*" on the title-page of its review. The popular poet Mehemed Emin's verses, written in the purest Turkish, formed the nucleus of the review. Young writers eagerly rallied around it, and very soon the Turkish Hearth developed its own literary and social circle. Delicate questions of history and

philosophy began to be openly discussed. Ibrahim Hilmi published a book under the title "Europeanisation" (*Avropalilashmak*) in which he boldly criticised the backward and uncivilised habits of the Turks. The idea of nationalism was strongly fomented by influences from abroad. Leon Cahun's works of history (*Introduction a l'histoire de l'Asie Centrale*) in which he unearthed the past glory of the Turks justly appealed to their national pride. Instead of seeking for ideals in the glorious past of Islam, they began to derive strength from the history of the Turanians. These vague ideas soon found permanent form in the hands of an able poet and writer. The very name of Ziya Gok Alp was a symbol of anti-Islamic nationalism, for only the first part of it was Muslim and the last purely Turkish. He, like most of the young Turkish nationalists, avowed the French school of sociology, the rationalism of Auguste Comte and Durkheim. His poems were more aimed at the masses, but his theory was contained in a serious work: *Turkchuluk Esaslari* (The Principles of Turkish Nationalism) in which he points at the common racial and cultural ties of the Central Asiatic and Ottoman Turks, and lays down the foundation of Turkish politics in a pan-Turkish nationalism which is destined to build up a new Turkish people. In his book he kept aloof from the wild speculations of some Turanists who dreamt of an empire of Turanians of several hundreds of millions, comprising all the peoples who more or less speak Ural-Altaian languages. His Turanism was restricted to a practical political programme. He advocated the puristic tendencies of modern Turkish writers, but discouraged the forcible introduction of obsolete Turkish words into literature in the place of firmly rooted Arabic expressions. As a vehicle of instruction he emphasized the need for using the Turkish language instead of the Arabic, and he insisted upon having the Koran translated into Turkish and for the sounding of the *ezan* in the Turkish language. He advocated equal civil rights for women, and pressed for a legal code framed by men of the present suited to the needs of the present. His fluent style and his impressive arguments found ready response among the youth of the country, and a number of books were written under the influence of his teachings.

The Turanist movement was however not received without opposition. The more conservative elements, brought up in the older atmosphere of religious ideas, scented sacrilege and blasphemy in its teachings. Equally patriotic, they were not convinced by the ideas of the national radicalism. They clung to the traditions of a Turkish culture which had been inspired by Islam, and cherished the older forms in literature and the habits and customs of the Turkey of yesterday. The political and economic results achieved by the modernists were not encouraging. After the deposition of the Sultan. Turkey was plunged in war and the cost of living rose alarmingly. The whole country was transformed into a desolate region where deserters from the army freely roamed, beggars died in the streets, profiteers revelled in champagne-carousals, while the people was slaughtered on battlefields. The older school distrusted those theoretical experimentalists who had their "heads crammed with French books and unripe ideas". Round the book of a former grand-Vizier, Said Halim Pasha, on the "Islamisation" (*Islamlashmak*) these conservative elements were grouped. They had a printing press and a circle: *Sebil-ur-Reshad* (the way of righteousness), which published a series of books dealing with religious and social questions in the old-fashioned way. They also professed the need for religious reforms, but they held that these reforms must come from the religion of Islam and its principles. They definitely opposed the conception of legislation advocated by the nationalists namely that the *kanuns* or codes formulated by Ottoman Sultans had equal validity with the *Shari'at*, and combated the idea of deposing the Holy Law from its eternal pedestal and establishing laws framed by the human mind. The circle of the *Sebilur-Reshad* was of opinion that a liberal utilisation of the *Idjtihad* would furnish innumerable laws suited to the needs of the times.

This literary battle went on, either of the parties adducing now and then a valid argument, and often many a feeble one. The last word was rudely spoken. The starved and exhausted Turkish armies abandoned their post. A fearful collapse followed. Constantinople, for the first time after its capture by the Turks, was invaded by foreign armies and the *ra'yas* dis-

played an insolent attitude under the shadow of French and English bayonets. Turkey was humiliated beyond measure, and the strategic object of the Allies was realised. But the agreement to hand over Constantinople to Russia was not fulfilled. Russia, collapsing under the blows of the German army, had fallen a victim to Bolshevism. A shameful peace-treaty was forced upon Turkey which was calculated to paralyse its economic and political future.

The Turks have produced a number of great military leaders and organisers. At this critical time, there again rose a man out of the ranks. Trained to bravery on the battlefield, endowed with a perspicacious and practical mind, and an iron-will, he turned the table of fate. Mustafa Kemal Pasha had distinguished himself at the Dardanelles, and in spite of hampering intrigues had won the friendship and esteem of the most capable of Turkish generals and statesmen. At a time when everybody despaired of the fate of defeated and humiliated Turkey, he gathered the ragged and hunger-stricken fugitives of the Ottoman army and succeeded in creating out of them a national fighting machine fully worthy of its predecessors. His victory over the Greeks created a new situation. Among all the countries of the Central Powers, Turkey alone succeeded in having its peace-treaty revised at the point of the bayonet. A striking sequel to the dreams of the Young Turks who had started a new regime without a workable state-power and army behind it.

The victory of Mustafa Kemal was a Turkish victory, in spite of Ottoman Sultans and Caliphs. The fall of the dynasty and the abolition of the Turkish Caliphate was but a natural consequence of the course of events. Wahy Eddin Mehemed VI, who had followed his brother on the throne in 101S, took over the government in the most critical time of Turkish history. He was well-known to the Turks as an intriguer like his brother Abdul Hamid. He was rash enough to brand the patriotic measures taken by Mustafa Kemal in Anatolia as insubordination and rebellion. He was inclined towards a policy of obedience to the Allies in order to make his throne secure in the expected period of peace to follow. This attitude was as unwise as it was unpatriotic. Mustafa Kemal, a

strategist of the first order, recognised the natural debility of the *Entente* after the conclusion of peace, when no imminent danger threatened the fruits of victory nearer home. The political bonds that held together the Allies relaxed as soon as the strategic aims were achieved. The peoples of the *Entente* were weary of war, the European governments were frightened by the spectre of Bolshevism and the widespread discontentment at home. The victorious and the defeated were equally shaken to the foundations by the after-effects of the Great War. An agricultural country like Turkey situated in the midst of the steppes of Anatolia was the only one which could wage war with impunity. With a limitless territory for retreat, with no towns of industrial importance to lose, it could start a campaign of guerilla warfare so devastating in its effect on a pursuing army. It was the vainglorious Greeks who with their extravagant dreams of restoring the Cross on the Hagia Sophia, and regaining the empire of Alexander the Great, took upon themselves the task of extirpating the Turks from Anatolia. They fell into a trap, and their recklessly advancing army was annihilated. Their greed and consequent discomfiture for ever ended Greek influence in Anatolia. The victory of Mustafa Kemal saved Turkey. The peace-treaty was torn asunder and a new one was concluded. A National Assembly was convoked which vested all prerogatives of government in itself. Mehemed VI ceased to be the ruler of Turkey by this act. He was put under the tutelage of the National Assembly. At the same time he was declared to continue to remain the Caliph of the faithful. When Mehemed VI took refuge in an English man-of-war on the 17th November 1922, the Assembly declared him deposed and elected his cousin Abdul Medjid as Caliph. Next year (October 30, 1923) the Assembly finally proclaimed a republic, and on the 3rd March, 1924 suspended the Caliphate altogether. All members of the Ottoman dynasty were asked to leave the country within a year. Hussayn Ibn Ali, King of Hidjaz and Great Sherif of Mecca, proclaimed himself Caliph a few days later. Since the fall of Mecca, the Caliphate has remained vacant.

The step taken by the Turkish National Assembly of Angora created a general consternation in the world of Islam.

Was the Turkish Assembly authorised to depose a Caliph, the supposed spiritual and temporal head of universal Islam ? Was the Turkish Caliph really the temporal or spiritual head of Islam ? What was the Caliphate ? These and similar questions arose and agitated the mind of the peoples concerned.

In India a movement was started in the interest of the Caliphate, and a committee asked for explanations from Angora. It received the following answer: "The dream of Muslims that the Caliphate will unite in its bosom all believers was never realised. Instead it was an object of dissensions, and led to anarchy and wars among the Muslims. The real interest of the parties is henceforth to form distinct national governments, and the real spiritual tie between the believers shall be the convictioh that they all are brethren (*innama'l-muminuna ikhwat*)."

This answer was in perfect harmony with the national radicalism of the Turks, who on their onward march were not checked by a sentimental clinging to the traditions of the past. Their statement that the Caliphate was an object of dissension, a cause of anarchy and war was a historical fact. The consternation caused by the suspension of the Caliphate was mainly due to the fact that the meaning and role of this institution was ignored or misunderstood. In Europe it was generally believed that the Caliphate was an institution analogous to Popery, a kind of spiritual tribunal of all Muslims irrespective of their state-allegiance. The Ottomans cleverly exploited the belief in order to keep up a semblance of authority over all Muslims. If it were so, the Turkish Assembly of Angora had no right to depose and to elect the Caliphs, just as the Young Turks had had no right to depose Abdul Aziz and elect Murad V, depose Murad and elect Abdul Hamid in his stead as the Caliph. But the real fact of the matter is quite different.

Mohammad the Prophet was the leader in wordly and spiritual matters of his community of Muslims. Such a leadership was unknown in Arabia before him. It was he who created the community of Islam. It was the soul and core of all its teachings and institutions. He died prematurely, and he was unable to leave definite instructions regarding the

succession to the leadership of the community. In reality the vacancy could not be filled adequately by any body else, but it was necessary that somebody should at least assume the nominal status of a leader and thus continue to maintain unbroken the religious ties of Islam. The community sought guidance along the right path, for it was beset with uncertainties and doubts. In general esteem Abu Bakr, the oldest friend in arms of the Prophet, appeared to be the worthiest of all to undertake this task. He was an intrepid stalwart old man endowed with military skill and well-versed in the revelations and the precepts of the Prophet. He was the proper person to assume the leadership vacated by the Prophet, and he was named the successor: *Khalifa*. He became the leader of a community which soon grew into a fighting army and developed into a state. The task which the "followers" had to perform became gradually more and more different from that of the Prophet. The first four Caliphs tried to maintain the traditions of the community just as they were during the life of the Prophet, and later on, this particular period was idealised and became the model on which Islamic theory strove to build up its institutions. But theory and practice never coincided in reality, for the theory was based on an idealisation of events which had no foundation in historic reality. History developed in its own way. In Syria, *Mo'awiya* founded a state, an Arabic kingdom, and cared little for the idealised conceptions of a Caliphate which never had real existence save in the books of the learned. The Ommayyad kings hardly ever fulfilled the ideal of a Caliph, the wordly and spiritual leader, defender, and executor of the holy law. After the rise to power of the Abbassides, the community of Islam was split into a number of states, each with a distinct ruler of its own. The worldly power so essential to leader (*imam*) of the community was gone, together with the unity of the community. A fiction was substituted for the reality. Although the Abbassides were regarded as Caliphs, as the overlords of Muslim Sultanates, the Sultans were in reality much more powerful, and controlled a much larger army. The Sultans requested the Abbasside Caliphs to invest them with authority and on their request being granted, the caliphate changed its

character, and became an acknowledged tribunal of legitimacy. As the Sultans grew in power, they began to have differences with the Caliphs, and did not hesitate to attack the territory of the Caliphs, and finally in the 12th century the Caliph's authority became restricted to a small state with practically no worldly power at all. They degenerated into a mere symbol of a traditional idea. They were no longer Caliphs in the sense of the golden age of Islam, and the Sultans tolerated them only as the titular heads of the religion of Islam who however had no right to interfere in the worldly affairs of government and administration. The Sultans took over the worldly duties of the Caliphate, they organised their state, they ruled over it and they administered the holy law. In practice they executed all the functions of a Caliph, and the Muslim state-law interpreted their real power as a kind of Caliphate ordained by God, based on obscure Koranic verses like 38 : 26. "*inna dja'alnak khalifat fi l-ardh fahkum bayna'nnas,*" etc. Finally the Sultans deliberately assumed the title "caliph" in consideration of their worldly power which was essential to the *imamate*, but they were not "successors of the Prophet" (*khalifatu' nnabi*) but were "Caliphs of God" (*khalifat Ullah*).

After the extinction of the Abbasside Caliphate by the Mongols (1258), some of the Abbassides took refuge in the court of Egyptian Mamluks and continued the appearance of legitimacy of the Caliphate in theii own persons. The Sultans of Cairo took over the task of safeguarding the roads to the holy cities, which gradually came to be recognised as one of the regular duties of the Caliph. This idea of course was of a much later date, for Islam was *eo ipso* cradled in these towns, and it was only after the passing away of all authority from these places that they came to be recognised as the only spots which could claim rights of sanctity in Islam. The Sultans of the Mamluks seized the Caliphate by the investiture of the fugitive Abbassides, and by virtue of the protection they accorded to the holy cities. Outside Egypt any powerful Muslim king could assume the title of Caliph on the strength of the assertion that God had granted him success (*Waffakahu*) and thereby made him an executor of the holy law on earth.

The Sultans of the Ottomans attained to the title of

Caliph exactly in the same way. After their success on the battlefields of Europe they became the most powerful *Sunnite* rulers. Selim I conducted a campaign against the Mamluk Sultan Kansah, and on the field of *Dabik* the Abbasside Caliph Mutawakkil who accompanied the Sultan fell a prisoner to the Ottomans (1516). The Ottoman Sultan was so little influenced by reverence for the Caliph that he carried him away as a prisoner to Constantinople. Actual power and success was the thing which mattered, and the authority of the Caliphate was so insignificant in comparison that nobody grudged the prisoner this pretentious title. The Caliph was a prisoner, a noble prisoner indeed, in memory of what had been an object of veneration in the past, but no importance was attached to the office. After the death of Selim (1521), Mutawakkil returned to Egypt and died there in 1543 in perfect oblivion. There is a legend which makes Mutawakkil confer the title on Selim. In the ancient theory of Islam it was essential for a Caliph to be a Koreyshite, an *eo ipso* postulate, as the successor of the Prophet could not possibly belong to any other tribe in those times. The Caliphs created by the right of the sword never fulfilled this requirement. But the changes in the political situation made it essential to revise the ideas current in a previous age. It became clear that temporal power was the chief characteristic of the Caliphs, and it implied the guardianship of the two holy cities and the pilgrimage there. As Selim became the protector of the holy cities after the fall of the Mamluks, he took up the title of *Khadim-ul-Haramayn* (servant of the two Holies) which was an expression of his paramount supremacy in the Muslim world.

Much later the Ottoman Sultans began to call themselves Caliphs as they became in reality the executors of the holy law on a vast territory ruled over by them by the grace of God; but they never seemed to attach any political importance to it. As long as they were in actual power and overlords of a considerable portion of *dar-ul-Islam*, theoretical consideration did not move them. The situation became different when the Ottoman power began to decline and vast provinces inhabited by Muslims were lost and passed under Christian rule. On account of this change the importance of the title, neglected

and disregarded for a long time, was suddenly revived. It is noteworthy that the misunderstanding of the title, and the utilisation of this misunderstanding was due not to a Muslim but to an orthodox Christian, the Armenian historian Muradgea d'Ohsson. The new conception of the Caliphate is first met with in the peace-treaty of Kuchuk Kaynardje which was concluded between Russia and Turkey in 1774. According to this peace-treaty the Sultan had to acknowledge the independence of the Khans of the Crimea. The loss of territory and of sovereignty was a grevious one. The Turks with their inborn diplomatic skill managed to profit by the uncertainty in the meaning of the Caliphate. They emphasized the theory that Muslims cannot acknowledge a foreign ruler as they all must be subjects of "the Caliph". In course of negotiations the Turks succeeded in securing the overlordship of the Ottoman Sultan as Caliph over the religious ordinances of the Crimean Muslims. In this peace-treaty the Caliph appears definitely as the religious head of all Muslims, irrespective of their political allegiance. This conception of the Caliphate was not Islamic in spirit. It owes its origin to a Christian who was probably influenced by the idea of Popery, and it was used effectively by the Ottomans in order to preserve at least partially their influence over those peoples who were at one time under their temporal overlordship. The Ottomans took care to keep this misunderstanding alive among the European diplomats, and pressed this point in all subsequent peace-treaties. The Ottoman Sultan naturally came to be recognised as the spiritual head of Islam, and his name was included in the Friday-prayer (*khutba*) although this act was an explicit expression of political sovereignty. Abdul Hamid founded his pan-Islamic propaganda on the fiction of an all comprising spiritual Caliphate.

The idea of a spiritual Caliphate took such a strong hold on the mind of the Turks also that, although contrary to Islamic doctrines, the National Assembly of Angora deposed the Sultan Mehemed and at the same time recognised him as Caliph. In their mind the Caliphate had become a symbol of the spiritual unity of Islam, and by tolerating a Caliph they wanted to retain the allegiance of the Muslims outside Turkey. The spiritual Caliphate was of short duration. The Assembly

busied itself with the task of formulating the functions of the Caliph, but at this point it became evident that no member of the dynasty of Osman was capable of discharging the duties of the Caliph. They were neither jurisconsults nor theologians ; the office of a kind of Popery conferred on them was not at all congenial. The natural consequence of the abolition of the Sultanate was the abolition of the fiction of the Calphate as well.

The Muslim world felt as if it had lost something by the abolition of the Caliphate, something though for which it had never cared much before. There was no discontent when previous Sultan-Caliphs had been deposed, and the Muslim world was not stirred even when the title was transferred from Mehemed VI to Abdul Medjid II. But in 1924 the Indian Muslims were eager to convoke an inter-Islamic Conference. They dreamt of establishing a kind of holy synod the president of which would be considered as Caliph. But there was no agreement regarding the constitution of this synod. Would the members be elected for life or from year to year ? Neither could the functions and the scope of authority of this body be settled with unanimity. Should it restrict its activities to matters purely religious or should it assume a dictatorial authority controlling the governments from a moral and religious point of view ?

An Egyptian judge Ali Abdar Razik has put in his book on the "Fundaments of Government" (*Al Islam wa usul ul-hukm*) a new theory regarding the ecclesiastical state of Islam. According to him, Islam has never claimed a worldly government ; this was left to the free consideration of the believers. The Koran does not mention the Caliphate, consequently it cannot form part of the Islamic dogma. The idea of Caliphate was created by the legal handbooks compiled centuries after the death of the Prophet. The religious leadership need not necessarily involve political sovereignty. The mission of the Prophet was exclusively religious, and never aimed at the foundation of a temporal government. Islam is but a spiritual revelation, a moral doctrine and a belief with no connexion with any external authority which takes upon itself the task of executing its dicta. It is noteworthy that all the above theses

were accepted and passed by the Ulemas of the University of al-Azhar. It was the Rector of this University who convoked a congress for the discussion and settlement of the question of the Caliphate. There was no agreement even as regards the venue of the congress. It was a sad spectacle ; but a striking proof of the rupture in the world of Islam. Some objected to Cairo because Egypt was not an independent country, and proprosed Afghanistan or Turkey as a more suitable place of meeting. Ibu Sa'ud issued an invitation to Mecca. There was no accord on the very important question of whom to invite and to admit. There were some prominent Shiites, Zaidites who had taken part in the Caliphate movement. Could they be admitted to the congress, and be thereby given a legitimate status in the orthodox community ? This would mean a breach in the historical traditions of Islam, to preserve which the congress was being convoked. Should the Muslims of Turkey, and of Russia, who in their republican tendencies had broken with orthodox Islam be invited and admitted? Such questions clearly showed that the abolition of the Caliphate was merely an outward recognition of conditions which had existed for centuries. The Muslim world which on account of its dogmatic rigour was torn into factions, and could not unite even for the purpose of a temporary inter-Islamic conference, how could it submit itself to the authority of a single body in practice?

The proposed congress assembled at last in 1926, in Cairo, accompanied by the greatest indifference of the Muslim world. The delegates who gathered together were sent by private associations, not by the unanimous consent of the different countries. The congress discussed barren questions regarding the title of the Caliphate and its requirements, and finally declared that Islam had ceased to be a compact social or political body, and had become separated into national units. Consequently these separated Muslim nations could not be brought under the rule of a single Caliph: in any case, such an attempt would be premature, and the congress contented itself by merely creating a central office for arranging inter-Islamic congresses to be held annually. In 1926 a congress was also held in Mecca, which similarly decided to meet annually at the time of the pilgrimage. It is to be hoped that these cong-

resses, if conducted with moderation and a really deep religious spirit and inspired by the historic sentiments, will bring together the extreme elements on a common platform, and will gradually strengthen the spiritual and cultural unity of the Muslim peoples belonging to different races, countries and political units.

Thus ended however the discussions regarding the Caliphate. The National Assembly of Angora intrepidly proceeded to newer reforms and framed new laws with a complete disregard of the Koran, Hadith or Idjma. Legislation became a purely human affair; a complete separation of the church and the state was effected. The *wakf* endowments were sequestrated by the state, the dervish fraternities dissolved.

The government, however, adopted a vigourous colonising policy aimed at strengthening the Turkish elements in the state. In accordance with the peace-treaty of Lausanne, the Greeks and Armenians were permitted to leave the country whenever they liked, and the consequent gap in the population had to be filled with new immigrants more valuable to the nation than the turbulent *ra'yas* were. Millions of Turks live outside the boundary of Turkey in constant danger of denationalisation. These precious elements, the *Mubdijirs*, are systematically helped to settle and are quickly absorbed. Some half a million persons are said to be colonised in Anatolia every year. The government wants to make up for the loss of population and wealth in the years of war and devastation. It may be emphasised that of all the new reforms this scheme of colonisation is most conducive to the progress and rejuvenation of the country. Turkey in spite of its heavy losses in territory has retained the core of its possessions: Anatolia. A territory large enough to feed a prosperous population of thirty millions has but nine million inhabitants, poor and ignorant. Villages are scattered over a vast territory impassable in winter for want of suitable means of communication. The Ottoman armies had continually drained away the population from the villages, and no care had been taken to make good the loss. There is a Turkish saying that Turkey was destroyed by the *pashas* and the goats. The *pashas* squeezed the population and cut the forests, while the goats gnawed off the roots. The

devastation of the country is indeed alarming. The new government has an immense task to perform, but it has faced its problems courageously. The future of Turkey depends not so much on its new literature, European culture, and fashion and dress but on its economic welfare and military power. A sound economic policy, and a patriotism rising to ascetic self-denial for the purpose of building up a wealthy, healthy and wise nation are the only means of atonement for the deplorable neglect of the past.

The government edicted a series of new codes. It accepted the best codes from all nations: the penal code of Italy, the civil code from Switzerland and the commercial code from Germany. They were all translated into Turkish, put before the assembly and after short discussions unanimously carried. As a consequence of these European codes many aspects of social and economic life imperceptibly underwent a deep change. Wine drinking is no longer introduced, polygamy lost its legal sanction, commercial restrictions of sheriat-times are no longer valid, and many new customs were created by the acceptance of the codes. For example, in future, women and children will have to bear the name of the husband and the father respectively. It was inevitable that the new legislation would change the onward appearance of life in Turkey. Harem-life and the veil disappeared, women go about freely in society, participate in social activities, dress in the European fashion and share all the amenities of life with their husbands.

It cannot be denied that the change was a little sudden, and the war-time hardships and privations found relaxation in a somewhat easy-going conception of life in large towns. Much of the superficial frivolities of European life were accepted at their face value as European culture. The lightest forms of pleasure-seeking, and the insipid outgrowths of superficiality were readily accepted. European dancing in its modern hysterics found ready acceptance and was looked upon as a praiseworthy mark of progress. Fortunately such conceptions are confined to a very small minority, and it is to be hoped that after the novelty has ween away it will soon subside.

A more striking change was effected in religious life. Before the war the streets of Constantinople were teeming with

white-turbaned *softas* (students of the sheri'at) and *hodjas* (teachers, priests). With their many coloured cloaks they contributed largely to the picturesqueness of the town. Most of them enjoyed a modest living on the numerous *wakfs*, and being exempted from military service, spent their lives in studying Arabic, medieval jurisprudence and scholastic theology. The most capable hands were taken away from agriculture by their diversion to the mosques where they led an unproductive life. While farms could not be worked for lack of labour, the *imarets* (students' hostels) were filled with stalwart peasant-boys cramming Arabic. With the sequestration of *wakfs* this wastage of productive material ceased. A fatal blow had already been administered to the *wakf* system during the war, when an edict suspended the exemption of such students from military service. It had become evident that most of them took refuge in religious studies in order to avoid military duties.

Mosques have again become purely places of worship and their *personelle* was restricted within the necessary limits. It must be confessed that the Turks do not appear to be very fond of going to mosques, as most of them are half empty. They pretend that the European dress hampers religious ablution and the posture of prayer on the ground. An innovation is to be introduced: pews and music, most horrifying to the pious ! Such innovations appear to be equally futile in the eyes of the sober-minded Europeans as well as to orthodox Muslims who consider them unnecessary. No Christian has ever left a mosque without being deeply touched by the noble simplicity of Muslim worship. An atmosphere of inspiration pervades the lofty cupola adorned with the sublime names of the Prophet and the four Caliphs, under which, facing Mecca, man, infinitely small compared with the powers of nature, humbly worships his Creator.

It has been already pointed out that the new nationalistic spirit of Turkish literature adopted European forms in supersession of Arabic. The traditions connecting Turkish literature with Asiatic models were so much disregarded that even the legitimacy of the Arabic script was questioned. It is true that the Arabic script is not a perfect medium for

reproducing Turkish words. It is perhaps more difficult to learn than the Latin script, but the amazingly large number of illiterate persons in Turkey was not due to this fact, but to a backward system of school-administration. It is also true that Arabic written characters, if not executed carefully are hardly legible. But in spite of all these drawbacks the Arabic script has served as a common link for all the Muslim peoples. The argument that it hampers foreigners in learning Turkish does not seem to be very cogent, as the difficulty is not at all insurmountable, and there are many European languages using Latin characters and possessing a rich literature which are equally neglected. An acceptable and fairly established Arabic othography of Turkish served all practical purposes. The abolition of Arabic script means the petrifying of all the literary treasures created during six centuries. When Hamdullah Subhy Bey, former Minister of Education, assured me that as soon as he recovered from his nervous breakdown, he would introduce and make obligatory the Latin script, it had struck me like a threat of cultural suicide, and I did not take it seriously. It appeared to me to proceed from the habit of blind imitation of everything European, rather than from a conviction of the superior value of the Latin script. Nevertheless it has been carried into effect, and the Latin script has now taken the place of the Arabic.

In the new Turkish alphabet each sound is represented by a single letter, sometimes with diacritical hooks. In this respect the alphabet is very systematic and correct, but when it comes to its application, the same uncertainties prevail in the spelling of words as in the superseded Arabic script. The rules of spelling established by a Special Committee are not of great help, and may result in great disorder in spelling. Phonetic writing was adopted as the basic principle in the new spelling, but this principle was carried out sometimes to extremes, and was sometimes ignored altogether. I have seen some pedantic orientalists trying to transliterate Turkish words like: *oldighi* which were pronounced: *oldu*. Turkish phoneticians made the selfsame blunder in writing *bildigi* and *oldugu*, and *oglen* with the same "g", under the influence of the Arabic script. It is very doubtful whether *Mitat* for *Midhat*, *teretut* for *tereddud*,

etc., is phonetically correct; it is scarcely suitable from a pedagogical point of view, since the declension rechanges the "t" into "d". Istambol has changed in the new spelling under the influence of French "Stamboul" into *Istambul*. Innumerable instances of the slipshod way in which the new system has been applied may be adduced, but the main point does not lie here. The important question is whether the new alphabet will prove congenial to the Turkish mind. The Arabic script was the bearer of a literature which suited the tastes of those who read it, and that there always was an adequate number of readers is proved by the abundance of Turkish men of letters. The new literature of Turkey since the Crimean war also brought forth some very remarkable works, with good promise of a bright future. The spirit animating these works was closely connected with the words expressing it, whether originally Arabic or Persian, since they were completely Turkicised. These words cannot be used in the new script as they are hardly recognisable. With the loss of their original garb the spirit and the flavour also seem to have disappeared. Arabic script was the bridge which admitted and also absorbed innumerable Arabic and Persian words into the Turkish language. I am apprehensive that the Latin script may similarly serve as a bridge for the introduction of French words which will imperceptibly slip in and deform the character of the Turkish language. The treasures of Turkish literature of the past will be shut off from the reading public of the future, and there will be no continuity of ideas, and no coherence of ideals. Scripts have sometimes proved stronger barriers than hills and rivers. The Cyrillic Servians and the Latin-lettered Croatians are two distinct nations speaking the one and the same language; not even political union could fuse them together and induce them to give up their separate scripts.

Turkey appears to have burnt all the bridges which connected her with her history, and she looks only to the future. New men of letters must arise with a new inspiration of their own to create a new literature with new words and permeated by a new spirit. Whether the genius of Turkey is capable of achieving this task time alone can show.

III. Persia

The Persians take a unique position among the peoples professing Islam. Numberless centuries before the revelation of the Koranic religion Persia had a remarkable culture and a highly developed civilization. In ancient times it was the cradle of thoughts and aspirations which illumined mankind with deep religious ideas radiating to Iranian and non-Iranian peoples. It was the centre of a mighty political organization which brought forth imperial influences reaching even to the far-off Balkans and stirring up the evolution of Greece. The arts and crafts of administration and of military organization were first developed to a paramount superiority by Persians in their defensive actions against their Northern foes, the ever-roaming restless hordes of the Central Asiatic plains, the Turanians. Their strategy and state-craft became a model to the Turks who adopted and further developed Persian achievements on the field of warfare.

Speculative and fanciful, but endowed with an uncommonly rich intellect, the history of Persian culture is one of the most splendid spectacles in the evolution of civilization. Every external influence which has enriched their mental store in the course of their history, became blended with their character, which augmented, embellished and variegated, has still in its innermost recesses retained an irradicable fascination for the spiritual, the fantastic, the extravagant, and the artistic. Islam, with its matter of fact theology, grew through contact with the Persian intellect into a vivid transcendentalism which reared a metaphysics, the exuberant foliage of which threatened to crush its very roots and foundations. Islamic doctrine even in its most sober aspects gained an allegoric meaning in the eyes of Persians with whom everything was so highly spiritualized that contact with reality was often lost. Islam suffered more heresies at the hands of Persians than of all other races professing the religion of the Prophet. The dogmatism of Semitic Islam blossomed into metaphysical speculations in which lie embedded the memories of Persian mental history. We therefore find that the same old theme crops up again and

again in a new garment and under a new name and is always hailed with boundless enthusiasm.

In modern times a movement which has rapidly gained ground not only in the East but also in Europe and America and which has become a religion supposedly professed by millions has its roots in Persia. A new religion has arisen, a religion of humanity, a universal creed for the whole of mankind which in its present form is not only a factor of social and perhaps of political importance in Persia, but to judge by its literature written in English, seems to have been enthusiastically accepted by many Americans. The religion of Bahaism is a charactertic example of the Persian spirit. It is a remarkable phenomenon that in countries which show such a deep contrast in cultural matters as America and Persia, this religion has made such an amazing progress. This alone would justify our interest in its study.

It is known that after the death of the Prophet Muhammad, the Muslim community soon split asunder into hostile parties which in the course of time developed into distinct theological sects: the Sunnis and the Shiites, the latter being the partisans of Ali. According to the Shiite view Muhammad appointed Ali to succeed him as the spiritual head of Islam but his rights were usurped by the first three Caliphs (Abu Bakar, Omar, and Othman). The Shiites of course do not approve of and do not believe in the legality of the election of a Caliph, as this office, or as they call it, the Imamate, is inherent in Ali and his descendants. It was conferred by God first upon the Prophet, then upon Ali by the Prophet and afterwards on Ali's descendants. It has, therefore, nothing to do with popular choice or approval. The Caliph of the Sunnis is an outward, visible, defender of the faith ; the Imam of the Shiites is the divinely ordained successor of the Prophet, endowed with all perfections and spiritual gifts, whom all the faithful must obey, whose decision is absolute and final, whose wisdom is superhuman, and whose words are authoritative. The Imamites are descendants of Ali's son Husayn who according to popular belief had married the daughtei of the Persian-Sassanian king Yazdigird III, and who died a martyr's death at Kerbela (A.D. 680). This explains the affection in which

the Imams are held in Persia, since they are regarded as the direct descendants not only of the Prophet but also of the royal house of Sassan. The Imamites are divided into the Ismailis or adherents of the seven Imams, and the *Ithna* Ashariya or adherents of the twelve Imams. We are mostly concerned with the latter here.

The twelfth Imam left no male issue, but as the world cannot do without an Imam, the Shiites of the sect of the twelve Imams—the state religion of Persia since the 16th century—believed that the last Imam never died but only *retired from mortal ken and resides in a fabulous town called* Jabulka among his faithful disciples from where he will issue forth in the fullness of time to do justice among mankind. He will appear as the Imam Mahdi, the God-directed, whose messianic advent every Shiite is eagerly expecting. It is held that since the disappearance of the Imam two main periods have passed: (*a*) the minor occultation (*ghaibat-i-sughra*) A.H. 260-329 (A.D. 873-942) during which four intermediaries communicated his instructions who were called the *Bab*, or gate, as they permitted entrance to the will of the Imam ; (*b*) the major occultation (*ghaibat-i-kubra*) during which no intercourse, not even indirect, was possible with the Imam. At the end of the 19th century Sheikh Ahmed al-Ahsai revived the idea that amongst the Shiites there must always be one perfect man capable of serving as a channel of grace between the absent Imam and his church. Thus such personages as were convinced of their superhuman faculty and Godly inspiration may consider themselves as intermediaries, as gates so to say, to the knowledge of the absent Imam. In the 10th century a certain Ash-Shalmaghani ibn Abi Azakir had suffered death under the Caliph Ar-Radhi for assuming this same title of Bab and for teaching heretical doctrines which included among others the tenet of transmigration of souls. Sheikh Ahmed and his successor, Seyyid Kazim of Rasht, did not however make use of the title Bab, but their conception of the 'perfect Shiite' was identical with the idea connoted by this title.

The tenets of the Sheikhi school may be summarised as follows: Sheikh Ahmed believed that the body of man was composed of parts derived from each of the nine heavens and

the four elements: that the grosser elemental part perished irrevocably at death and that only the more subtle celestial portion would appear at the resurrection. He named the subtle body: *jism huwarkilya*[1] (which seems to be derived from a Greek word, perhaps Hercules ?) and believed it to be similar in substance to the forms in the world of similitudes. He denied that the Prophet's material body had, on the occasion of his night journey to heaven, moved, from the spot where it lay in a trance. He believed himself to be under the special guidance of the Imams. He regarded the Imams as creative forces and based his thesis on dialectics. For God is spoken of in the Koran (23.14.) "the best of Creators" ; consequently He cannot be the sole creator. He went so far in his ultra-Shiite tendencies that he interpreted the words of the first chapter of the Koran: *iyyaka na'budu* (Thee do we worship) as referring to Ali.

After the death of Sheikh Ahmed, Hajji Seyyid Kazim of Rasht was unanimously recognized as the leader of his school. Kazim did not nominate a successor. According to Babi historians he had hinted that the transitional state of things under which he and his master Sheikh Ahmed had assumed the guidance of the faithful was drawing to a close, and that a brighter light was about to shine forth from the horizon of the spiritual world. From whatever quarter the sun of truth shall arise it will irradiate all horizons and render the mirrors of believers' hearts capable of receiving the effulgence of the lights of wisdom. The Sheikhis were anxiously expecting the appearance of some one who should assume the leadership of their party. One of them, Mulla Husayn of Bushrawayh proceeded to Shiraz, and on his arrival there paid a visit to Mirza Ali Muhammad with whom he had become acquainted at Kerbela and who was also a staunch adherent of the school. Mirza Ali Muhammad learning of the death of Kazim, announced his divine mission, and adduced in support of his claims, the commentary on the Sura of Joseph. Mulla Husayn of Bushrawayh was soon convinced of the truth of the young man's assertion and heralded the advent of the

1. I have closely followed the histories of Babism and Bahaism translated, edited and ably expounded by the late Prof. Browne.

new leader, who assumed the title of 'Bab'. Mulla Husayn of Bushrawayh became the gate of the gate and the first letter or the first to believe. The rapidity with which the movement spread was wonderful. Representatives of all classes hastened to tender their allegiance to the young Seer of Shiraz, but it was from the old Sheikhi party that the most eminent supporters of the new faith were recruited. The followers of the Bab were called Babis. A number of the Sheikhis however refused to recognise him and adhered to another representative of the doctrine, Hajji Muhammad Karim Khan ; and a fierce quarrel ensued between the two parties. The othodox Sheikhis proved to be the foremost and most implacable enemies of the Babis and their relentless persecutors. There was very little difference between the preachings of Mirza Ali Muhammad called the 'Bab', and those of Hajji Muhammad Karim, since each claimed to be neither more nor less than the intermediary between the absent Imam and his followers, exactly in the same way as were the four original gates who had served as channels of communication between the Twelfth Imam and his followers during the period of the minor occultation.

It was in 1844 that the new light arose on the horizon of the Shiites, but it was bitterly challenged by the followers of other 'lights' who claimed an equally valid heavenly inspiration, although their success among mankind still continued to be determined by mundane factors. The historical importance of any idea is not determined by its intrinsic merits, or its alleged divine origin, but often depends on the skill with which it is adapted by its expounders to suit local conditions. The history of Babism, a new religion arising out of the soil of Persian Shiism, with its appeal to the imaginative, the heroic perseverance of its martyrs, the unscrupulous machinations by which each faction assailed its antagonists, and the final adaptation of the doctrine to the tastes and predilections of modern minds, corroborates this old maxim of history.

The Bab was only 27 years of age at the time of his manifestation. The sensation created by his advent frightened the ulemas, and they induced the Government to arrest him and after a trial to condemn him to imprisonment. This action on the part of the Persian Government added to his fame, and

gave impetus to the proselytizing efforts of his followers. The clash with the intolerant followers of orthodoxy soon provoked reprisals which led to bloody conflicts. Mulla Husayn of Bushrawayh and Hajji Muhammad Ali took shelter in an old fortress in Mazenderan which had to be taken by storm after a siege of 7 months ; revolts and risings of the followers of the Bab occurred at Zanjan, Yazd and Niriz which were put down with great cruelty on the part of Government. The spread of the new creed was amazing. In the course of 6 years the whole of Persia was filled with Babis, a clear proof that the idea appealed to the imaginative Persians. The revolutionary attitude of the Babis gained many adherents among the peasants who were dissatisfied with the economic situation in Persia, and the Government was compelled to try to crush the movement at its root. The lenient treatment accorded to the Bab up till then was abandoned and he was sentenced to death on the charge of high treason and was executed at Tabriz in 1850. This was followed by a vigourous persecution of his followers. Finally in 1852, when an attempt at the life of the Shah was perpetuated by some of the Babis, the whole sect was violently suppressed. The beautiful poetess Kurrat ul Ayn and many others, innocent of all complicity in the conspiracy, were tormented and cruelly murdered. Some of the initiates fled to Baghdad, and a branch of Babis arose from this small group of exiles. They modified the doctrine and developed it into a form more acceptable to those who had no sympathy for the exuberant fancies of the Persian mind. Among these fugitives there was a lad, called Mirza Yahya who was such an enthusiastic believer in the Bab's manifestation that he had travelled across the whole of Persia with his half-brother Mirza Husayn Ali to see the Bab. The Bab heard of Mirza Yahya's zeal and devotion, and declared that in him was fulfilled the prophecy long current in Shiite tradition in the form of a conversation between Ali and Kumayl 'regarding the coming of a light shining from the dawn of eternity'. The Bab conferred on Mirza Yahya the title of Subh-i-Ezel (the dawn of eternity),[2] gave him his own ring and authorized him

2. The language of the Bab himself and the terminology of transcedental lore used by his followers reflect the exuberant flight of fancy

to develop the philosophy of Babism as he thought fit, and appointed him as his own successor.

On the Bab's death Subh-i-Ezel was unanimously recognised as the spiritual head of the sect. But his half-brother who had received the name of Bahaullah, the Splendour of God, came into greater prominence owing to the retiring habits and also on account of the extreme youth of the leader himself. Other claimants to the leadership also arose but did not gain any following. The two brothers lived in peace and harmony at Baghdad, where the Turkish Government had permitted them to reside and where they had many followers. Here the original doctrine underwent many changes. Bahaullah conducted a secret but successful propaganda in Persia. He matured his ideas for the future, and gradually remodelled the tenets for which the matyrs in Persia had sacrificed their lives. The circumstances in Baghdad gave him a wider horizon and this compelled him to take a broader view. He retired for two years to the hills of Kurdistan to meditate upon his ideas. Subh-i-Ezel still adhered to the orthodox tenets of Babism but his peace-loving nature prevented an open hostility with Bahaullah.

As time ripens the blossom into luscious fruit there occurs a profound change in the outward appearance, although the organic continuity is not destroyed. Similarly a religious idea becomes changed in the course of time by the influence of leaders who have an active grasp of the realities of the situation. Babism has been altered profoundly by the gradual assimilation of new conceptions, some of which were entirely foreign to the original doctrine. According to Babi views, the essence of God, the primal divine Unity, is unknowable and entirely transcends human comprehension. We can know nothing about it, we see only its manifestation in the succession of prophets. There is no fundamental divergence or conflict between the prophets, all of whom represent the same Universal Reason. Their teachings differ only in outward form according to the particular needs of the time. The Bab is also considered to be one of these manifestations (the Ismaili sect

which often glorified beautiful words without much meaning. The followers were given fantastic names full of esoteric allusions.

has seven incarnations of the Deity, called Natik, Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Christ, Muhammad and Ismail), and the party of Subh-i-Ezel continued to revere him as such, while the followers of Bahaullah looked upon Bahaullah as this manifestation. It is incumbent on the prophets to use the language appropriate to his audience. It will be different for little children or for young men or for men of mature age. The prophet's words must not therefore be taken too literally, but must be explained with reference to the actual circumstances in which they are uttered. This is the justification of an allegorical interpretation which is so dear to the Shiite mind. The Ismaili sect was equally prone to explain away the literal meaning of revealed scriptures; when the Koran says, that Jesus had no father, the interpretation is that he received instructions from no trustworthy teacher: when it says that he raised the dead, it signifies that he brought knowledge to dead understanding. The Babis handled this allegorical interpretation (ta'wil) in a masterly way. They denied the physical existence of Paradise or Hell; as the rough Arabs could not understand ethical values Muhammad spoke of them of Good and Evil in symbolic form. When, in course of time, one particular form of expression in the teachings of a prophet becomes obsolete, a new manifestation appears and modifies the teaching in a suitable way to advance the eternal progress of the world. The Babi doctrine is most definite on this point. It recognises and emphasizes changes in human affairs, and wishes to mould every thought in accordance with the progress of the world. There can be no final revelation and no last prophet, an idea which was very sympathetic to the philosophy of evolution, and which in its narrowest sense had also been avowed by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. According to the Babi doctrine the prophets, as manifestations of the Universal Reason, were forerunners of progress and were always in advance of mankind. This is why every prophet had been and must be rejected by his own people. So did also the Bab fare, when one thousand years after the disappearance of the Twelfth Imam (A.H. 260; the Bab's manifestation took place in 1260 A.H.), he was persecuted and put to death. In order to prevent mankind from falling into the

same error he emphasized that even his manifestation was not the last and that others would again come in future ages to bring new revelations suited to new circumstances and altered conditions.

The theory of evolution seems to be embodied in a theology which believed in a succession of prophethood all manifesting the one and the same Universal Intelligence but under diverse conditions and aspects. This view, which is apt to make Babism a sympathetic doctrine even to modern rationalists, was not, however, the source of inspiration for the innumerable martyrs who died for Babism. What attracted them to the new creed even at the cost of their lives was the mystic doctrine of Babism which was full of transcendental correspondences and equivalents between names based on numerical values of letters, and of the theory of divine manifestation.

Almost all the constituent elements of Babism had their source in the mediaeval heresies of Persian origin. The nation instinctively cherished and clung to these mystic doctrines in which it found a peculiar charm.

Muhammad very soon discarded the title of the Bab and assumed that of the Point (*Nuqta*). There is a spurious tradition according to which Ali is supposed to have said that all that was in the Koran was contained implicitly in the opening chapter, and all that was in this chapter was contained in the first line (*Bismillah*), and finally in turn in the initial *B* of the *Bismillah* and this in turn in the point which stands under the Arabic B, and Ali is also supposed to have said "I am the point which stands under the B."

Mirza Muhammad was henceforth called the Primal Point, or His Holiness the First Point: the manifestation of the Primal Will. The Babis believed that the primal will is incarnated in the intermediaries between man and God. In one sense it is identical with God, for a tradition says that whosoever visited Husayn in his tomb was as one who hath visited God on His Throne. So likewise the Bab said "Oh Ali, none hath known God save I and thee; and none hath known me save God and thee, and none hath known thee save God and I."

Babi mentality may be appreciated by the following extracts from the *Nuqtatu'l-Kaf*, one of the earliest and most authentic histories: 'as the same mirror may at different times reflect different objects, so the same individual may successively become the returns (or recurrences) of different prototypes.' When Mirza Muhammad, speaking more freely, as his followers became more receptive of divine mysteries, declared himself to be the Point, Mullah Husayn ceased to be only the Gate of Gate and became the actual Gate ; and when he was killed, his brother Mirza Muhammad Hasan in turn received the title. But this is not all. Mirza Ali Muhammad was first of all, Bab, or Gate, then Zikr or Reminder, than Nuqta or Point. For a while Mullah Muhammad Ali of Barfurush became the Point, and Mirza Ali Muhammad relapsed into being his Bab and during this time wrote nothing. "Sometimes it happens," so runs the *Nuqtatu'l-Kaf*, 'that the Point becomes quiescent in effulgence and that this effulgence becomes manifested in the Gate, just as the apostle of God did not wield the sword but his wrath was made manifested in the form of Ali. But after the death of God's apostle, Ali became the Point and Heaven of Will, and Hasan became the Gate and the Earth of Devotion, while Husayn and Salman and the rest were the Letters of the Living. So likewise in speaking of the Islamic cycle of prophethood, so long as Muhammad was alive, Ali declared himself to be only a servant amongst his servants, but that, so soon as the Prophetic Mirror (by which is meant the sovereign form of Muhammad) was shattered to pieces, in less time than a twinkling of an eye, it (the Sun of Truth) arose in the mirror of saintship (saintship represents the esoteric espect of religion) so that Ali thus became the Mirror or 'Manifestation' of the Primal Will and the Proof of God upon earth was able to say: 'I am Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad.' All theophanies are identical in essence and differ only in circumstance, just as the sun which shines today is the same as that which shone yesterday or that which will shine tomorrow. These lights of the firmament of Prophethood and Saintships, like the celestial luminaries, have a rising and setting, a manifestation and an occultation."

It is obvious that all these nations can be explained only by means of allegorical comparisons with the phenomena of nature with which they really have nothing in common. A figurative expression takes here the place of rational thinking in terms of concepts corresponding to realities.

As to the eschatology of Babism, it denies bodily resurrection but the spirit of the deceased may continue to take an interest in his earthly affairs, and some passages in Babi writings also refer to the transmigration of souls, while the return to the life of his world is conceived in a symbolic sense as a reflection upon a mirror. However vague the Babi doctrine may be on certain points it is essentially dogmatic and every utterance of the manifestation of the period must be accept without demur. The *Kitab-i-Aqdas* (the "Most Holy Book") of Bahaullah begins with "The first thing which God has presented unto His servants is knowledge of the Day, spring of His Revelation and the Dawning-place of His Command, which is the Station of His Spirit in the world of Creation and Command. Whosoever attaineth unto this hath attained unto all good, and whosoever is debarred therefrom is of the people of error, even though he produce all kinds of good deeds." The Bab and his immediate followers were not inclined to tolerance. According to the 'Bayan,' no unbelievers were to be suffered to dwell in the five principal provinces of Persia, and everywhere they were, as far as possible, to be subjected to restrictions, and kept in a position of inferiority. The Babis are strongly antagonistic to Sufis on account of their individualism and "inner light,' and to the orthodox Musulmans because they did not acknowledge in the Manifestations the fulfilment of Islam.

A most characteristic feature of Babism is the belief in the intrinsic value of the letters of the Alphabet. The algebraic correspondences have puzzled men since the time of Pythagoras. In Muslim history it was the Hurufis who first attached magic power to numbers and tried to derive secret meanings out of the numerical value of the letters of the Alphabet. Their system was eagerly taken up and elaborated by the Turkish Bektashi writers. The Ismailiya sect believed in the number seven. The Deity had seven incarnations, between each

of the seven incarnations there arose seven Imams, each Imam was at the head of a heptad; seven operations were required in the making of a convert and so on. The algebraic correspondences, developed by the Babis, are amazing. The theological system is practically built upon algebraic correspondence. The formula *Bismillah irrahman, irrahim* (in the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate) comprises 19 letters in Arabic script which are the 'Manifestation' of the Point under the B, just as the whole Koran is the further Manifestation on a plane of greater plurality of the Bismillah. The number 19 became a kind of a sacred number, a fundamental basis of the Babi doctrine by which the truth of its tenets could be algebraically proved.

The Arabic word for one is *Wahid.* and the numerical value of the letters composing the word give the sum $(6+1+8+4)$ of 19. This unity of 19 in turn manifests itself as $19\times19=361$, which is the number of "all things" (Kullu Shay) ; the letters are numerically equivalent $(20+30+300+10)$ $=360$ to which by adding "the one which underlies all plurality" we get 361, the number of all things, which again is the square of 19. The number 19 was made the basis of all divisions of time, money, etc. The Babi's idea of a coinage having 19 as its basis has however been abandoned along with many other impracticable ordinances. Thus the Babi year comprised 19 solar months of 19 days each, to which intercalary days are added between the 18th and 19th months. The last month is consecrated to fasting. The unity is also manifested in the divine attribute *Hayy*, the Living, which equals $8+10=18$, and with the one which underlies all plurality makes 19. The Bab together with his 18 disciples constituted the letters of the Living (19). The choice of Mirza Yahya by the Bab as his successor was probably determined by the fact that the numerical value of the name Yahya was 36, a multiple of 18 on which account he was also called *Wahid* which is numerically equivalent to 28, the number of letters constituting the Arabic alphabet. The town Adrianople, where the Babis were exiled, was called by them the land of mystery because the syllables in the name of the town had the same numerical value (260) which corresponds to the year in which the twelfth Imam disappeared.

This doctrine is full of metaphysical transcendentalism, and even such reforms as savour of utility, such as the amelioration of the position of women or the prohibition of chastisement of children are entirely based on mystical considerations. For example, the Bab taught that the future manifestation of God shall first appear as a child, it would therefore constitute a grave sin for any one to treat the august infant harshly, and hence it was necessary that the chastisement of children should cease. The play on words formed another important element in the philosophy of Babism.

The conflict between Mirza Muhammad the Bab and Hajji Muhammad Karim Khan regarding the status of the Intermediary to the hidden Imam clearly shows, however, the reaction of external factors on the growth of a revealed religion. It was not the intrinsic value of the rival doctrines which decided the issue, but the influence exerted by the respective leaders on their contemporaries. The growth of a doctrine and its ultimate success is determined by the simplest human factors, anthropological and social. The fact that the social factors were of greater importance than the transcendental and metaphysical nature of the doctrines was clearly recognised by the new leader Bahaullah, who by his carefully conducted propaganda succeeded in attaining a supremacy over the more dogmatic and single-minded Subh-i-Ezel.

A new period in the history of the movement set in with the rise of Bahaullah. The little party of emigrants at Baghdad were too near the Persian frontier, and the Persian Government requested the Porte for their transfer to Adrianople in 1864. Here Bahaullah publicly announced that it was he in whom God had become manifest in accordance with the prediction of the Bab. He strictly adhered to the doctrines of Babism, and although there is some evidence to show that he had at one time considered himself to be merely the successor of the Bab, he now assumed a new role: he was the promised one, the real manifestation of God, to whom the Bab was only a forerunner and herald. This announcement, like the previous announcement of a similar nature, was not accepted and recognised unanimously. Some, even among those who originally belonged to the circle of the Bab, vehemently opposed the new manifesta-

tion of God. A fierce and disgraceful quarrel attended with violence broke out between the rival parties, until finally the Turkish Government had to intervene in the fight between the two brothers. The hostile factions were segregated and exiled separately. Subh-i-Ezel, who had been nominated by the primal point as his successor, was transferred to Famagusta in the island of Cyprus, while Bahaullah was sent to Akka. To each of the factions four adherents of the opposite group were attached, so that the Turkish Government could be kept informed regarding the activities of both the parties. The followers of Bahaullah put to death all the four Ezelis attached to their party. The hostility between the two Babi factions continued with pen and dagger alike. The sect of the Ezelis which had adhered to the original doctrine in its rigid and narrow form, gradually declined in influence while the followers of Bahaullah gained in strength. Bahaullah succeeded in getting recognised by a large number of people as the manifestation of God, and he gradually put the Bab in the background as compared with his own heavenly splendour. The name of the sect was changed from that of Babism to Bahaism. The doctrines of the Bab were regarded only as preparatory and provisional, while Bahaullah was authorized to give them a final shape and sanction. And Bahaullah made full use of his authority. The Babi religion was firmly rooted in Persian Shiitism and it had no chance of making proselytes outside the Shiite world. Bahaullah discarded all restricting metaphysical peculiarities. He also modified the attitude of uncompromising hostility to the orthodox Musulmans, and to the Shah of Persia which had animated the Babis, and adopted a conciliatory and even sympathetic attitude towards all likely converts. He developed the ethical side of the teaching, and in his letters to potentates he used a gentle and patient tone. He had a clear grasp of the aspirations of the human mind in the 20th century and included in his teachings a very wide scheme of social reform in a most sympathetic way, but with the simplistic views of a dreamer. Anti-alcoholism, unemployment help, women's suffrage, reform of criminology, socialism, local autonomy in political administation, universal language, international union, and general peace, all figured in his programme.

Nor was Bahaullah devoid of the power of clairvoyance. In the year 1869 he wrote to Napolean III rebuking him for his lust of war and for the contempt with which he had treated a former letter from him. The epistle contains the following stern warning: 'Thy doings will throw thy kingdom into confusion; sovereignty shall pass from thy hands to requite thee for thy deeds, and thus thou shall find thyself in grievous loss. Convulsions shall seize all peoples in yonder land, unless thou dost arise in this cause and in this straight path follow the spirit. Hath thy pomp made thee vainglorious ? By my life, it shall not endure, nay, it shall pass away, unless thou dost cling unto this strong cord. We behold abasement hastening upon thy heels and thou art yet of them that are heedless.' It is characteristic that an English Bahai writer believes firmly that the debacle of France in 1870 would have been averted if Napoleon had adopted the noble cause and the straight path of the Bahai.

Bahaullah was by no means led by Germanophile motives 'in beholding abasement hastening upon the heels' of Napolean. In the *Kitab-i-Aqdas* which was begun in Adrianople and finished in Akka, he sent a similar stern admonition to the emperor of Germany:

'O King of Berlin...Recollect the one who was greater than thee in station (Napoleon III), and whose position was higher than thine. Where is he ? and where are his possessions ? Be admonished and be not of those who sleep. He cast the tablet of God behind him when we informed him of what had befallen us from the hosts of oppression and this disgrace beset him from all sides until he returned to the dust in great loss. O King, think deeply concerning him as well as about those like unto thee who conquered cities and ruled over servants of God—and God brought them down from palaces to graves. Be warned and be of those who are mindful'.

'O Banks of the River Rhine, we have seen you drenched in gore because the swords of retribution were drawn against you. You shall have another turn. And we hear the lamentation of Berlin, although it be today in manifest glory.'

The English writer alluded to above says : "during the period of German success in the Great War of 1914-18, and

especially during the last German offensive in the spring of 1918, this well-known prophecy was extensively quoted by the opponents of the Bahai movement in Persia in order to discredit Bahaullah; but when the forward sweep of the victorious Germans was suddenly transformed into a crushing and overwhelming disaster, the efforts of these enemies of the Bahai cause recoiled on themselves, and the notoriety which they had given to the prophecy became a powerful means of enhancing the reputation of Bahaullah."

A message of consolation is addressed to Persia in the *Kitab-i-Aqdas*:

'O land of Ta (Teheran) be not sorrowful from any cause. God hath made thee the dawning place of the joy of the world. If He will, He will bless thy throne with one who will rule with justice and gather together the sheep of God which have been scattered by the wolves. Verily he will treat the people of Baha with joy and gladness. So, he is of the essence of the people in the sight of God.'

'Rejoice, for God hath made thee a Horizon of light, because in thee was born the Dawning Place of the Manifestation. Soon affairs will be changed in thee and a republic of men shall rule over thee. Verily the countenance of Grace will not cease to behold thee with the eyes of love. Soon peace will overtake thee after commotion. Thus it hath been decreed in the Book of Wonders.'

Turkey, which had given shelter to Bahaullah and his followers, did not fare better at his hands than France and Germany. There are several passages in the *Kitab-i-Aqdas* which predict the downfall of the Ottomans, but evidently his wrath was directed against this kingdom, 'than which a handful of dust is greater before God,' because it did not take up his cause in a way which would have satisfied him. 'Thou didst unite with the Ruler of Persia for doing me harm,' so he wrote to Ali Pasha, 'although I had come to you from the Dawning Place of the Almighty, the Great, with a cause which refreshed the eyes of the favoured ones of God. Didst thou think that thou couldst put out the fire which God hath enkindled in the Universe? Its blaze and flame will be increased. Soon it will encompass the world and its inhabitants. Soon the land of

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martyrs (Adrianople) will be changed and will pass out of the hands of the King[3] and commotion shall appear in the districts and affairs will be in confusion because of what hath happened to those captives' (Bahaullah and his companions).

The Turks cared little for the threats of Bahaullah. The Shiite element in his doctrine did not appeal to them, and his cosmopolitan teachings found deaf ears among the awakening nationalists. The Government had an eye on him, and when his quarrel with Subh-i-Ezel led to violence, it prevented further bloodshed by separating the rival factions, and Bahaullah never attained any political power in Turkey.

His exhortations sound overbearing and egoistic if we dare doubt his infallible prophethood and venture to judge them as those of a normal mortal. He addressed Americans in the *Kitab-i-Aqdas* some fifty years ago in the following words: 'O Rulers of America, Presidents and Governors of the Republic therein, hear the call from the Dawning Place on High. There is no God but me, the speaker and the Omniscient: Bind up the broken limb with the hands of justice, and break the sound limb of the oppressor with the rod cf the Command of your Lord, the Ruler, the Wise.'

In the writings of Bahaullah we notice a clearness ot style which is in striking contrast to the rugged and unintelligible character of Babi literature. Through him God addresses His creatures, proclaiming His love for them, teaching them His attributes, making His will known, announcing His laws for their guidance and pleading for their love, allegiance and service. In his writings the form of expression frequently changes. Sometimes it is evident that the man himself is speaking, then without a break the writing continues as if God Himself were speaking in the first person.

His mission was to bring about unity of all mankind in and through God. He said:

'Of the Tree of Knowledge the all-glorious fruit is this exalted word: of one tree are all ye the fruits and of one bough the leaves. Let no man glory in this that he loves his country, but let him rather glory in this that he loves his kind.'

3. This prophecy has not yet been fulfilled, for Adrianople is still in the hands of the Turks.

It was this ethical and humanitarian spirit, rather than the dry metaphysical doctrines of Bahaism which gained new followers all over the world, while those who were allured by the glamour of mysticism still found ample scope in it. In Akka, where Bahaullah lived as an exile, people flocked to see him, and by this intercourse with the world his doctrines broadened. He dropped most of the minor restriction imposed by the Bab, which were dictated in many cases by his personal tastes and feelings. Such were the prohibition of smoking and the eating of onions, the regulations as to clothing, forms of salutation, the use of rings, perfumes, the names by which children might be named and so on. The laws of Bahaullah, with the exception of the law of inheritance, are much simpler in character and are such as may be enforced in practice. For example, smoking is not now unusual among the followers of Bahaullah, while the Ezelis still maintain the prohibition as strictly as ever.[4]

In the nineties, a Syrian Christian converted to Bahaism, Ibrahim George Khair-ullah, settled in the United States, and started active propaganda in America on behalf of the new revelation. He delivered a large number of lectures on Bahaism and published a number of books which were favourably received. The monotonous factory life of over-industrialized America harbours a naive sentimentalism which finds pleasure and enthusiasm in all humanitarian ideas, and it was not surprising that Bahaism developed a vigourous branch-circumstances of his marriage. For a long time he showed no inclination for marriage, and no one understood the reason for this. Afterwards it became known that there was a girl who was destined to become his wife, one whose birth came about through the blessing which the Bab had given to her parents in Ispahan. They had no children although the wife was longing for a child. On hearing this the Bab gave the husband an apple and told him to share it with his wife. After they had eaten of that apple, it soon became apparent that their long

4. While acting as an interpreter to Abdul Baha during his tour in Hungary, I remember that I once offered him cigarettes, and he carefully selected one and smoked it with apparent enjoyment.

cherished hopes of parenthood were about to be fulfilled, and in due course a daughter was born to them. This daughter was the elected wife of Abdul Baha. In the constant odour of sanctity and miracles, Abdul Baha was brought up as the future leader of the community.

In the face of the clear testament of Bahaullah little room was left for dissension, and yet a conflict over the same old principles soon broke out among the followers. The question was again whether Bahaism was a final revelation in which the possibility of new innovations ceased with the passing of the Manifestation of God, or whether Abdul Baha was entitled to further inspirations of his own: In the *Kitab-i-Aqdas* Bahaullah himself had explicitly stated that 'whosoever lays claim to any authority to promulgate fresh revelations before the completion *of a millenium is assuredly a liar and an imposter*'. Abdul Baha's brothers and some of the leading Bahais therefore strenuously resisted the claim of Abdul Baha to promulgate new doctrines or fresh ordinances, on the ground that a millenium of occultation must pass before a new exposition of the divine will would be necessary. Thus the Bahai religion split into two hostile parties fighting in Persia as well as in America and other countries of the world. Ibrahim Khair-ullah espoused the cause of the conservative party, and consequently Abdul Baha was also obliged to send missionaries to America to counteract Khair-ullah's propaganda. The strife between the different Babi factions, the heads of all which claim direct divine inspiration, is a disfiguring flaw in the history of the movement, and in an *insoluble contradiction in its* basic principles. Assuming the Bab to have been divinely inspired (and this movement in America), marked by the production of a copious but shallow literature.

Bahaullah died in 1892. He nominated as his successor his eldest son Abbas, also called Abdul Baha, servant of Baha. Bahaullah had conferred on his son, in accordance with the usual practice in his community, the sonorous title 'Ghusn-i-Azam,' the most mighty branch; the younger son Mirza Muhammad Ali was called 'Ghusn-i-Akbar,' the most great branch. Abdul Baha's life was accompanied by thrilling romance. He was born at Teheran before midnight on the 23rd

May, 1844 (*5 Djumadha'tula, 1260*) in the very same hour in which the Bab declared his mission.

He was eight years of age when his father was thrown into prison. On one occasion he saw his father moving along the prison yard heavily shackled, his neck bowed under the weight of a heavy steel collar, his body bent by iron chains. This awful sight created a lasting impression on the mind of the boy. At Baghdad, long before the manifestation of God became clear to Bahaullah, the son suddenly felt a conviction that it was his father in whom the divine spirit shine forth. Sixty years later he dictated to his secretary his impressions of that period in the following words:

"I am the servant of the Blessed Perfection Bahaullah. In Baghdad I was a child. Then and there He announced to me the Words and I believed in Him. As soon as He proclaimed to me the word, I threw myself at His holy feet and implored and supplicated Him to accept my blood as a sacrifice in His pathway. What greater glory can I conceive than to see this neck chained for His sake, these feet fettered for His love, this body mutilated or thrown to the depths of the sea for His cause. If in reality we are His sincere lovers, if in reality I am His sincere servant, that I must sacrifice my life, nay all, at his Blessed Threshold."

From this time his friends began to call him: the mystery of God; a title by which he was known during the residence in Baghdad. Several wonderful stories are related about the innate sagacity with which while yet a boy he solved the most intricate metaphysical problems. A curious story is current about the assumption must be made not only by every Babi but by every Bahai, it is difficult to suppose that he should have chosen for his successor a person who was destined to be the chief opponent of the Bab himself.

The rise of Abdul Baha to supremacy was decided by forces which were not in the least divine, but most human. The reason for the success of Bahaism and its expansion during the lifetime of Abdul Baha must be sought in the peculiar appeal of its teachings to certain moods generated by the stress of the industrial civilization of the West. The mind tired by the drab monotony of factory life sought solace in the mystic

doctrines of Bahaism. It found a peculiar charm in mysterious phrases: "there is a mystic unity between Bahaullah and Abdul Baha. He is myself." Bahaullah spoke in the same way of the Bab: 'Had the Primal Point been some one else besides Me, as ye claim, and reached the event of My appearance, verily, he would never have left Me, but rather we would have had mutual delights with each other in My days.'

A summary of Abdul Baha's creed is given in his Tablets: 'My name is Abdul Baha (Servant of Baha), my qualification is Abdul Baha, my reality is Abdul Baha, my praise is Abdul Baha. Thraldom to the Blessed Perfection is my glorious and refulgent diadem and servitude to all the human race is my perpetual religion. Through the bounty and favour of the Blessed Perfection, Abdul Baha is the Ensign of the Most Sacred Peace, which is waving from the supreme Apex; and through the gift of the Greatest Name, he is the Lamp of Universal Salvation, which is shining with the love of God. The Herald of Kingdom is he so that he may awaken the people of the East and West. The voice of Friendship, Uprightness, Truth and Reconciliation is he, so as to cause quickening throughout all regions. No name, no title, no mention, no commendation hath he, nor will ever have, except Abdul Baha, the friends of God must assist and help Abdul Baha in the adoration of the True One; in servitude to the human race; in the well being of the human world and in divine love and kindness.'

'O ye friends of God: Abdul Baha is the manifestation of Thraldom, and not the Christ. The servant of the human realm is he, and not a Chief. Non-existent is he, and not Existent. Pure nothingness is he and not the Eternal Lord. No one must believe that Abdul Baha is the second Christ, nay rather, he must believe that he is the manifestation of servitude, the manifestation of the unity of the human world, the Herald of the true One with spiritual power throughout all regions, the Commentator of the Book according to the divine fact and the Ransom to each one of the believers of God in this transitory world.'

As the teachings of the Bahaullah represented a great

advance from the metaphysical and ultra-Shiite doctrines of Babism, the teachings of Abdul Baha represented a still greater step forward in the ethical and practical development of the movement. He included all the noble aspirations of the age, all the humanitarian and social ideas floating in the air. All nations of the world should become of one faith and all men as brothers; the bonds of affection and unity between sons of men should be strengthened ; the conflict between different religions should cease, and differences of race be annulled. This noble aim could be achieved only by a fundamental change of heart among the peoples of the world, and education must be organized for this purpose. According to Abdul Baha all religions and sciences have a common purpose and a common aim.

In spite of such teachings we find that Bahaism was troubled by bitter internecine quarrels from beginning to end. We must conclude that all these humanitarian ideals were still dreams and were far from being realized in practice. The interpretation of history given by Bahais is equally fantastic. They believe that the 20th century begins an unprecedented new era in history, dissimilar in geography, and in technical and economical conditions to all previous eras, and fundamentally suited to the need of Bahai teachings. The technical inventions, and the knowledge of foreign languages especially appear to fill Bahais with an optimistic hope for the cessation of bloody conflicts between men. The synthetic aim of the movement can be appreciated from the definite instructions left by Bahaullah for the creation of temples of worship, which he called *Mashrik-ul-adhkar*. 'The dawning place of God's Praise.' The temple should be a nine-sided building surrounded by a dome, and as beautiful as possible in design and workmanship. It should stand in a large garden, surrounded by a number of accessory buildings devoted to educational, charitable and social purposes so that the worship of God in the temple may always be closely associated with reverent delight in the beauties of nature and practical work. Such temples are being built in Ishkabad, Bombay and Wilmette on lake Michigan near Chicago.

Abdul Baha lived at Akka, under the strict supervision of

the Turkish Government. He was visited from all parts of the world by ardent followers or curious sightseers. After the Turkish revolution he was declared free and in 1911 he undertook tours in Europe and America, delivering lectures, answering questions and expounding the doctrines of his religion of unity. The reception accorded to him must have deeply impressed him, and probably created an impression in his mind that his religion will soon be universal on earth. The universality of his teaching naturally attracted a large number of pacifists, suffragettes, esperantists, theosophists, prohibitionists, socialists and the ultra-liberals, while the mysterious effect, which oriental dress, beauty of personal appearance and the unfamiliar music of oriental language never fail to produce on Western minds, drew others out of pure curiosity. He succeeded in establishing new centres of Bahaism in Germany, France and elsewhere, while in America he gained a final ascendancy over the followers of his brother.

In Persia the persecution of Babis and Bahais has gradually ceased. There are a few Babis belonging to the old school, who call themselves *Kullu Shayis* and do not care about the quarrel between Ezelis and Bahais, and a large but indeterminable number of Bahais proper. Lord Curzon in his book on "Persia and the Persian Question," published in 1892, wrote: "the lowest estimates place the number of Babis in Persia at half of a million. I am disposed to think from conversations with persons well qualified to judge that the total is nearer one million. They are to be found in every walk of life from the ministers and nobles of the Court to the scavenger or the groom; not the least arena of their activity being the Musalman priesthood itself. If Babism continues to grow at its present rate of progress, a time may conceivably come when it will oust Mohammedanism from the field in Persia. This, I think, it would be unlikely to do, did it appear upon the ground under the flag of a hostile faith. But since its recruits are won from the best soldiers of the garrison whom it is attacking, there is greater reason to believe that it may ultimately prevail." This prediction however was not fulfilled; the movement after a phenomenal rise again subsided within normal limits.

Abdul Baha survived the Great War, and saw a good

deal of his life-work come to fruition. The Bahais set a good example of material work in transforming the barren Akka (Akhrabulbilad) into a little garden. They organized extensive agricultural operations near Tiberias during the war, and secured a great supply of wheat by which a famine was averted. Since the British occupation of Syria, Abdul Baha became the centre of a large circle listening to his illuminating talks, and hundreds of visitors from the East and West flocked to his house. The British Government was so profoundly impressed by his noble character and his great work in the interest of peace and prosperity of the people that they conferred on him a knighthood of the British Empire. When he departed from the earthly life in 1921 the British High Commissioner officially took part in his funeral.

He died without male issue. His grandson Shauk-i-Rabbani, a student of Oxford, was proclaimed as his successor, but he was unable to gather round him a group of followers. It is not unlikely that the Bahai movement will ebb out in platitudes of universalism. A typical example of recent writings is furnished by the book on 'The New Humanity' by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, the Secretary of Abdul Baha, in which the idea of universality is indiscriminately applied to such concepts as universal peace, universal patriotism, universal language, universal opinion, universal dawn (?), universal age,[5] universal newspaper, universal feminity,[6] universal painting and literature, universal aviation and broadcasting, universal penance and so on. It is a work not devoid of charm but without the slightest basis of science or a positive background of history.

The after-effects of the great War in Persia are however not very conducive towards the growth of mysticism. In the West there was a decided reaction against materialism, in the East there was a movement towards positivism, a process which has its psychological as well as social reasons. Bahaism is not

5. P. 181. "This is the age of women, for this very reason if for no other, it is a universal age."
6. P. 230. "In her hands is the jar of atar (scent) of the rose of understanding. An artist whispered into my ear: "I would rather spend one hour with her than seventy years with a saint.""

likely to continue to exercise its old magic influence on the Persian mind, which is now more inclined to be captivated by the forward march of industrialism. Romance will pass away with the growth of factories, and the colour of life will dissolve into the gray haze of outward uniformity. Nothing is more cruel than realities, for even if they give contact with truth, they fail to bring happiness, the illusion of pious hearts.

Water when analysed consists of two elements without taste and flavour, still it quenches the thirst and is the substance of life. Likewise every religion can be analysed into elements of myth, legends and popular lore ; still it quenches the thirst of man for guidance and truth and sustains him in his stumbling progress through errors and deficiencies in his slow approach to the harmony pervading the universe.*

* *The Visva-Bharati Quarterly*, October, 1929, January, 1930 and 1931.

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